ACROSS / A14

Police arrest top communist leader in Northern Luzon

NEWS / A2

Ex-UP president Nemenzo, 10 others, charged with coddling Magdalo escapees

WORLD / A20

Media groups don't believe Putin's pledge to go after killer of Russian journalist

BUSINESS / B1

IMF lauds RP's economic gains, says external vulnerabilities declining

'President torn between being mom and professor'

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IN CONFRONTING THE ISSUE OF THE PURPORTED cheating in the June nursing licensure examination, President Macapagal-Arroyo is torn between being a mother and a professor.

This was disclosed yesterday by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Presidential Management Staff chief Arthur Yap, who sought to explain

PRESIDENT/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, October 12, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 306 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Women dress to impress when fertile, study shows

WASHINGTON—WOMEN dress to impress when they are at their most fertile, US researchers on Tuesday said in a study indicating that signs of human ovulation may not be as mysterious as some scientists believed.

WOMEN/ A13

PANO YAN, E... MAHILIG MAG PUSTURA ANG MGA PINAY!

Cheating in Manila, Baguio only–NBI

17 officials of 3 review centers implicated

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

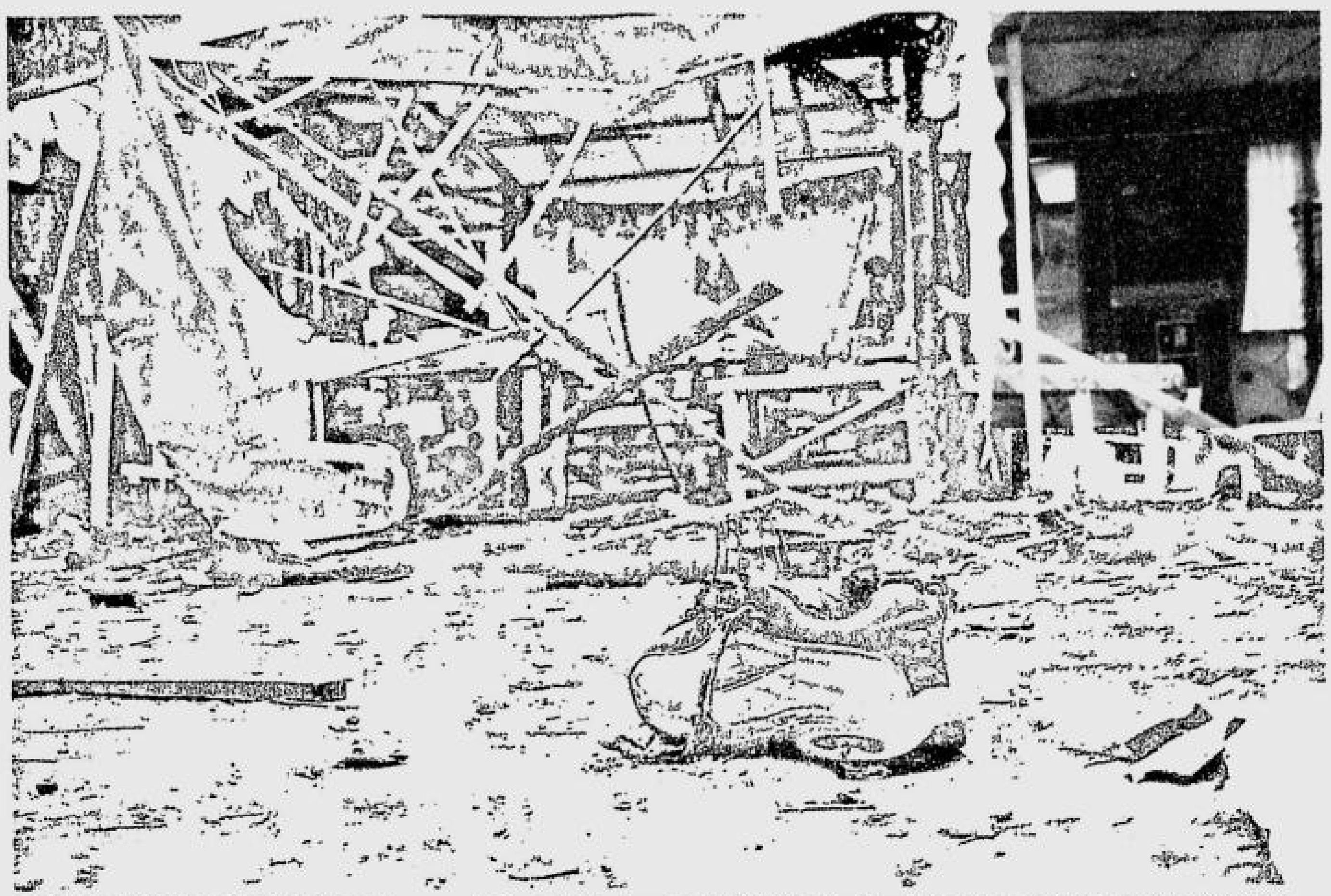
THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation yesterday announced that the leak of test questions for the controversial nursing licensure examination was limited only to testing centers in the cities of Manila and Baguio, covered only Tests III and V, and was perpetrated by 17 officials of three review centers.

The names of the concerned officials and review centers will be made public after the NBI submits its formal report to the Department of Justice, which will file charges of violation of Republic Act No. 8981, or the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) Modernization Act, NBI Director Nestor Mantaring said at a news briefing.

The review center officials are facing imprisonment from six years and one day to 12 years.

No PRC official was found culpable

CHEATING/ A4



SIX DIED HERE; 29 WOUNDED: The scene in front of the town hall of Makilala in North Cotabato after a bomb believed by police to be made from a mortar shell exploded Tuesday night. Police suspect al-Qaida-linked militants are behind the bombings. Another bomb went off Wednesday in Cotabato City but caused no injury. DENNIS JAY SANTOS, INQUIRER MINDANAO

Fourth blast in 2 days rocks South

By Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE went off yesterday at a shop in Cotabato City but caused no injuries a day after two blasts left at least six people dead and several dozen wounded, police said. A fourth bomb was dismantled.

Police blamed the incidents on the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah and guerrillas of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

All the six fatalities were the result of a bombing at Makilala town in North Cotabato on Tuesday. Authorities corrected an earlier report that the Makilala blast killed 12 people.

The violence came hours after the US, Australian and British embassies issued warnings against travel to Mindanao and said the threat of imminent attacks or kidnappings was high, specifically in places frequented by foreigners.

FOURTH/ A5

PRC chair displeases Palace; will she be axed?

By Christine O. Avendaño

LEONOR TRIPON-ROSERO, CHAIR OF the Professional Regulation Commission and personal dentist of President Macapagal-Arroyo, appears to be in a precarious situation as a result of her remarks at a Senate hearing on Tuesday.

"She should have exercised more prudence," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday said of Rosero, adding that he was surprised by what she had said, including her objection to the President's order transferring the PRC to the jurisdiction of the labor department.

Asked whether Rosero would be sanctioned for her defiant statements, Ermita said: "We will wait for the recommendation of the labor secretary."

To the question of whether the President had to find a new dentist, he responded with a hearty laugh.

Ermita said the transfer was ordered because Rosero had not acted "fast

PRC CHAIR/ A4

AFP blames Abu Sayyaf, JI for bombings

By Alcuin Papa

ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF GEN. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said yesterday the Jemaah Islamiyah and the Abu Sayyaf were responsible for the spate of bombings over the past 48 hours in central Mindanao.

"We are looking at the Abu Sayyaf as the number one (suspects). Included here is the Jemaah Islamiyah," said Esperon.

He said the attacks were in retaliation

AFP BLAMES/ A5

This time, it's the rescue team crying Mayday!

By Nikko Dizon
and Leila B. Salaverria

THIS TIME, IT'S THE RESCUE TEAM crying "Mayday!"

The Philippine Coast Guard Aviation Group has been without power and water supply since Typhoon "Milenyo" lashed Metro Manila on Sept. 28, slowing down office operations and affecting aircraft maintenance.

The aviation group conducts maritime patrol, search and rescue operations, and transports personnel and equipment.

Its air assets include two BO 105 Bolkow choppers and BN Islander light planes.

"They really need to have electricity

THIS TIME/ A13

N. Korea warns sanctions mean call to war; Japan bans all imports

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA'S NO. 2 leader threatened more nuclear tests if the United States continued its "hostile attitude" against the communist regime, the Japanese news agency Kyodo said yesterday amid mounting tensions in Northeast Asia.

South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun chastised the North's claimed need for a nuclear deterrent against foreign attack in rare direct criticism of his neighbor.

In Pyongyang, Kim Yong-nam, second to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, suggested his country was ready to return to stalled six-party talks if sanctions against his country were lifted, Kyodo reported from Pyongyang.

"The issue of future nuclear tests is linked to US policy toward our country," Kim was quoted as saying when asked whether Pyongyang will conduct more nuclear tests.

"If the United States continues to take a hostile attitude and apply pressure on us in various forms, we will have no choice but to take physical steps to deal with that," he said.

North Korea's latest remarks came after the country shocked the world on Monday by claiming to have conducted its first nuclear bomb test, triggering a US-backed campaign to have the UN Security Council sanction the country.

Kim, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, said in an interview with Kyodo that Pyongyang's next steps would hinge on US policy toward it.

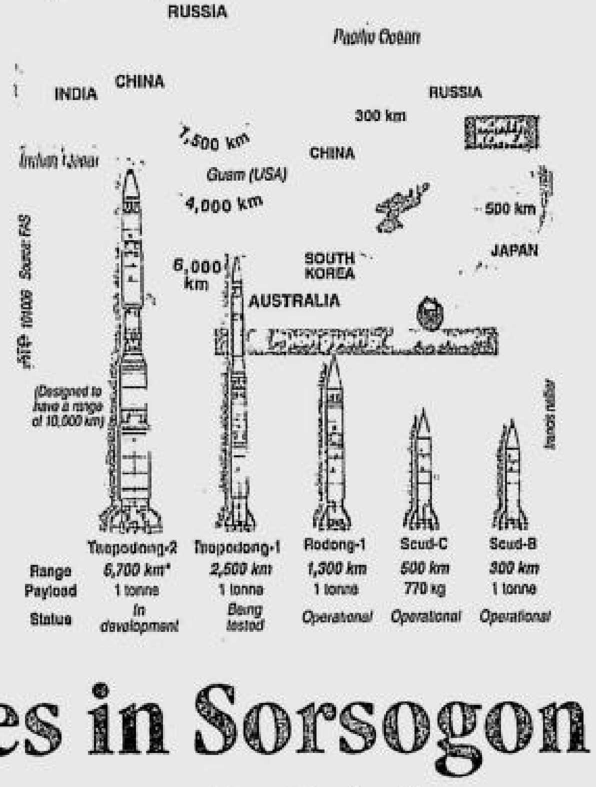
Tensions heated up throughout Northeast Asia yesterday with South Korea's military reportedly readying for nuclear conflict and North Korea warning that an international push for tighter sanctions would be an act of war.

A North Korean official said that the isolated, impoverished nation would regard full-scale sanctions against it as a call to war, Yonhap news agency reported.

"Sanctions are nonsense. If full-scale sanctions take place, we will regard it as a declaration of war," the official based in Beijing, who wasn't identified, told Yonhap. "The more pressure we get, the stronger our response will be."

On Wednesday, Japan an-

N. KOREA / A4



Ash from Mt. Bulusan blankets 10 villages in Sorsogon

ERUPTION UNLIKELY, says Phivolcs but that Mt. Bulusan activity still abnormal. Alert level remains 1. INQUIRER PHOTO

By Bobby Labalan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

ASH FROM MT. BULUSAN BLANKETED at least 10 villages in two municipalities in Sorsogon late Tuesday afternoon but scientists said an eruption was unlikely.

Classes have been suspended by the Department of Education in the affected areas, particularly those within the 4-kilometer danger zone.

To enable authorities to attend to the needs of affected residents, the communist New People's Army has declared a unilateral ceasefire around the restive volcano.

Samuel Guererro, spokesperson of the NPA Celso Minguez Command, said the command was observing a unilateral ceasefire within a 15-km radius of the volcano.

Bulusan blasted a thick column of ash 3 km into the sky late Tuesday, after nearly four months of relative calm, alarming residents of nearby villages.

The 1,560-meter (5,149-foot) volcano in Sorsogon has been showing signs of unrest since coming back to life in March. It has not belched ash since June.

Irosin Mayor Lilia Gonzales said six barangays in her town were affected, while the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported that five barangays were affected in Bulusan town.

ASH FROM/ A13

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Mindanao which may trigger flashfloods and landslides. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/10/11/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Ex-UP president charged

Nemenzo, 10 others to face obstruction of justice raps for harboring Magdalo rebs

By Margaux C. Ortiz and DJ Yap

FORMER UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines president Francisco Nemenzo Jr., lawyer Christopher Belmonte and nine others were yesterday charged with obstruction of justice for allegedly harboring fugitive rebel soldiers belonging to the Magdalo group charged with the July 2003 failed coup.

The National Bureau of Investigation and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group accused the 11 of harboring the fugitive soldiers from Feb. 21 to 27, after they escaped from their cells at Fort Bonifacio in Makati last January.

All fugitive soldiers were later re-arrested and charged in court.

In a complaint filed before Quezon City assistant prosecutor Dindo Venturanza, Nemenzo and the others were charged with violating Presidential Decree 1829, penalizing obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders.

The complaint was based on the affidavit of 1st Lt. Patricio Bumidang, one of the escaped soldiers who agreed to become a state witness.

The other respondents were Betina Balderama, Michael Yangson, Renato and Maui Constantino, Ret. Col. Jake Malajacan, Ret. Col. Rafael Galvez, Capt. Dante Langkit, Nilo de la Cruz and a certain "Sam."

LIEUTENANT BUMIDANG takes his oath as witness against alleged coup plotters. JOAN BONDOC

Joint probe

According to a joint investigation of the NBI and CIDG, four soldiers—1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, 1st Lt. Patricio Bumidang, 1st Lt. Nathaniel Rabonza and 1st Lt. Sonny Sarmiento—escaped from their detention cells at the Custodial Management Unit (CMU) of the Philippine Army in Fort Bonifacio on the evening of Jan. 17, 2006.

The escape was allegedly facilitated with the help of Belmonte, lawyer Rafael Pulido, Christina Antonio and Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME) member Jaime Regalario.

The three hid the four soldiers in different places, among them the houses of Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias, Malajacan and Constantino, a KME officer, according to the complaint.

Curiously, Pulido, Antonio, Regalario and Tobias were not named in the complaint, though their alleged role in helping the fugitives was narrated in the facts of the case.

Also, the complaint did not specify the involvement of Nemenzo, who chairs the Laban ng Masa, a coalition of groups opposed to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"These are only initial charges in connection with the failed coup plot last Feb. 24," explained Reynaldo Esmeralda, NBI acting deputy director for Regional Operations Services.

"We are still evaluating other pieces of evidence before we can come up with a final conclusion as to the alleged participation of Bishop Tobias," he added.

The four soldiers were initially brought to a priest's house in Sta. Quiteria, Novaliches, Quezon City where they stayed for several hours before they were transferred to a neighboring nuns' convent.

On Jan. 20, 2006, Belmonte and Antonio brought San Juan and Sarmiento to the house of Tobias in East Fairview, Quezon City while Bumidang, Ramonza and 1st Lt. Aldrin Baldonado—another Magdalo fugitive—hid in the house of Malajacan in Parañaque.

San Juan, Belmonte and Albert Guyal were arrested at a military checkpoint in Batangas a month later.

After that arrest, Balderama and her son Yangson allegedly brought fugitives Bumidang, Rabonza and 1st Lt. Angelbert Gay to the house of Constantino.

According to Esmeralda, Balderama told the Magdalo officers that a "withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo would soon be launched by a military group Para Sa Bayan led by Brig. Gen Danilo Lim and Col. Ariel Querubin."

Esmeralda said the Magdalo officers were staying at the Constantino house during the planned "withdrawal of support" from Ms Arroyo during the Edsa anniversary on Feb. 24 and the subsequent stand-off at the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio on Feb. 26.

Let's get to work, JDV tells truants

By Philip C. Tubeza

TALK ABOUT TRUANCY.

Speaker Jose de Venecia, like a school principal, had to personally appeal to his colleagues to attend the House budget hearings after many of them cut the hearing on Tuesday night, apparently to attend a dinner party.

De Venecia, who was forced to suspend the budget hearing the other night for lack of quorum, pointed out that the House only had until today to approve the proposed P1.127 trillion national budget.

"Please," the Speaker said. " Be present in full force."

"I would like to appeal to each and every member of the House of Representatives to be present in full force if we are going to approve this budget by midnight (today) or by dawn (tomorrow) morning," he added.

Slipped out

The House initially had a quorum on Tuesday but De Venecia was forced to suspend the budget hearing because many congressmen had slipped out for a dinner with visiting Israeli Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik.

"This afternoon we had 180 member present and we have to congratulate the members of the House for such a large turnout. But it turns out, toward 7 p.m., two major occasions were attended by members of the House, thereby preventing the existence of a quorum," De Venecia said before adjourning the session at 7:45 p.m.

At that point, the House was debating on the budget of the Department of Agrarian Reform and its attached agencies.

Congress is set to go on recess starting tomorrow.

BritishRedCross

Invitation to Tender for the Design, Documentation and Construction of Tsunami Destroyed Houses in the Republic of the Maldives

The British Red Cross Society invites suitably experienced Companies to tender for the design, documentation and construction of tsunami destroyed houses in the Maldives, as part of the Maldives Recovery Programme. The project, funded by the British Red Cross Society and implemented in cooperation with the Government of the Maldives, requires 250 private houses to be designed, documented and constructed on the island of Vilufushi (Thaa Atoll), Republic of the Maldives. The estimated timeframe for construction is from January 2007 to January 2008.

Bidders should have a proven track record of similar projects including the following:

1. **Proven design experience of large scale housing projects including undertaking beneficiary / end user consultations prior to final approval / tender award.**
2. **Proven experience of undertaking multi million dollar projects within required timescales.**
3. **Experience of working in remote and logistically complicated locations.**
4. **Experience of designing and constructing houses using culturally appropriate criteria and innovative methodologies.**

Qualified Companies with Design, Documentation and Construction experience are invited to submit their tenders by Monday 27th November 2006.
Tender documents are available on CDROM against payment of a non refundable fee of US Dollars 300, payable to British Red Cross.
Bidders must submit a Tender Security with their tender of US Dollars 3,500 in the form of a bank cheque or guarantee.
Bidders are required to attend pre – tender site visit on Thursday 2nd November 2006 and a pre tender meeting on Friday 3rd November 2006.

Tender documents are available from:
British Red Cross Society, Gaadhoo Building, Second Floor, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male, Republic of Maldives.

Email: tendervilufushi@brcs1.com.mv

Tenders from Organisations or Individuals ineligible to tender under the Government of Maldives Tender Board Procedures will not be considered.

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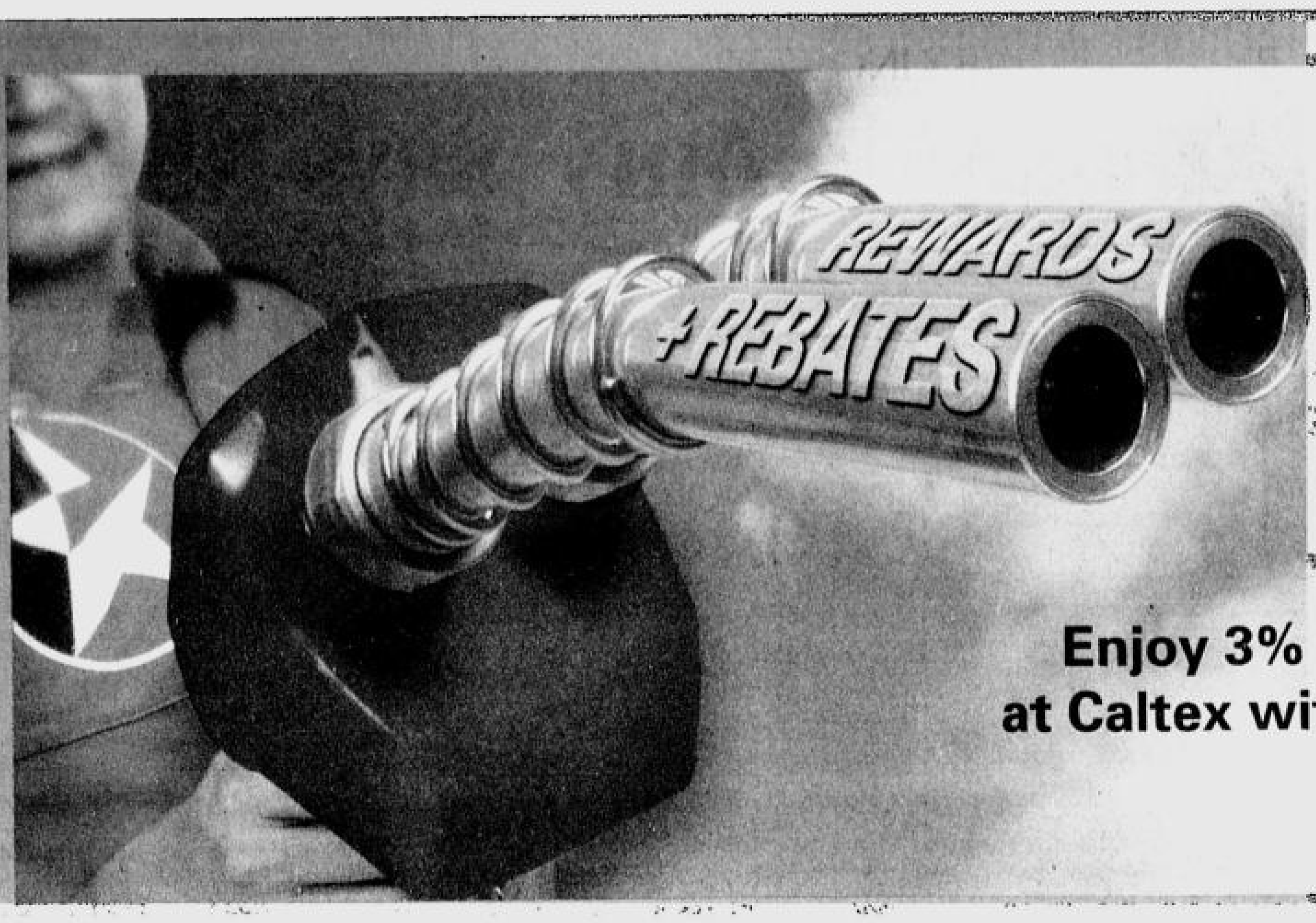

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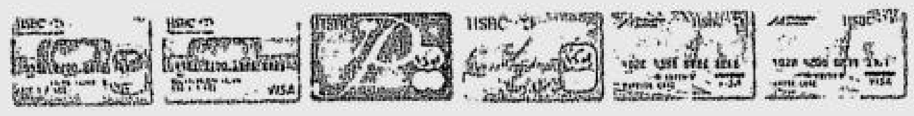

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Cheating in Manila, Baguio only, says NBI

ROSERO: Like pulling teeth

BRION: Order to retake or not on Monday

ANG: Accused of doing demolition job on PRC

From page A1

because, Mantaring said, the previous investigation showed that the manuscript containing the leak had come from Board of Nursing members Anesia Dionisio and Virginia Madeja.

A five-member panel had earlier been formed by the Ombudsman to investigate Dionisio and Madeja for graft and corruption.

Mantaring said the government did not consider these accused as flight risks because he considered them "professionals."

With its findings, the NBI considers the case closed.

"We have to close the investigation. Otherwise we'll have no end to these investigations," Mantaring told the INQUIRER.

Asked to comment, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said: "Yes, I agree with him that the case is closed as far as the NBI is concerned."

He said the NBI's job of "investigating the facts behind the leakage," as well as the matter of deciding on the issue of a retake, was now in the hands of Cabinet officials.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion said the NBI submitted to him yesterday morning its partial report on the extent and perpetrators of the leak. He said the complete report would be given to him tomorrow.

Brion said he would issue a department order on Monday at the latest as to whether a retake would be required of those who passed the June 11-12 board exam.

'Nationwide' probe

"As much as possible, I want this over within this week. I'm as eager as everyone [else] to finish this and to put a closure to this nursing exam leakage, so let's see what we can do," he told Senate reporters after his confirmation by the Commission on Appointments.

At the briefing, Mantaring said the NBI had "terminated" its "nationwide" inquiry into the leak.

"We are recommending the filing of charges against 17 people in connection with this investigation. We found evidence to support our findings that the leakage was in the areas of Baguio and Manila. In other areas, although there were rumors that there was leakage, we found no evidence to support that allegation," he said, adding:

"All factors were taken into consideration in the analysis and evaluation of facts. I am confident that it will warrant conviction."

The NBI had 20 witnesses in the investigation, including the persons responsible for photocopying the manuscript containing the leaked questions and answers, which were attested to by the copier operators.

"We have documentary evidence showing that the manuscript prepared by the examiner found its way to the review centers," Mantaring said.

He said that in finding the culprits, investigators compared the results of the three suspected review centers with the general average results of all the examinees.

All rumors

According to Mantaring, the NBI looked into all the rumors, as well as claims that the leak covered, not only Luzon, but also the Visayas and Mindanao, and not only Tests III and V but also Tests I and II.

"Aside from Baguio and Manila, there was no evidence gathered that there was also leakage in some examination centers," he said.

Mantaring said the NBI could not find proof that the branches of the three suspected review centers had also distributed test questions to their branches in the Visayas and Mindanao.

"The possibility is always there for the review centers [to give out the answers to their branches outside Baguio and Manila], but we have to go by the evidence," he said.

While the NBI had no recommendation on whether a retake should be conducted, Mantaring conceded that it would be difficult to identify the examinees who had used the leak to pass.

"It would be very hard to pinpoint who benefited because there are times that some students who had the leak did not use it," he said.

Ermita said the NBI could not yet reveal how many examinees from Baguio and Manila would be affected because the bureau was still matching the list of exam passers with the list of those who had enrolled in the three suspected review centers.

He said the count would be useful should the government decide to order a partial retake.

Ermita also said the concerned review centers were those that had been earlier named in the newspapers.

No need to wait

Brion said he did not have to wait for the Court of Appeals to decide on petitions contesting the move of the PRC to administer the oath to some of the board passers.

He said that as he had explained to lawmakers, the executive branch could act on the issue.

"I believe that the executive [branch] can and should act to end this issue as soon as possible for the sake of our examinees," he said.

To this, PRC Chair Leonor Tripon-Rosero said she had no comment.

But she said in a phone interview that the PRC had twice met with Brion and recommended that the government wait to see how the appellate court would rule on the matter.

The meetings took place on Sept. 27 and 30, she said.

The appellate court had earlier issued a 60-day temporary restraining order on the oath-taking of the board passers.

Rosero also said the PRC was sticking by its position against a retake.

Earlier, in an effort to remove the effects of the leak, the PRC invalidated 20 leaked questions in Test III of the exam and reduced the weight of the scores in Test V because 90 of its 100 questions had been leaked.

He has the power

Asked if the PRC would follow Brion's decision if he orders a retake, Rosero said: "We will leave it to our professional judgment."

Brion said that as for the department order he would issue, "I will aspire for Saturday or Sunday."

"If not, [it will be] not later than Monday. The issue here is the validity of the [draft executive order] for a retake and the [PRC] Resolution No. 31 [for no retake]," he said.

Asked if the President could change his order, Brion said: "Of course, everybody is under the control of the President. But she has already given me the power to make a decision here."

Brion said the NBI report would not be the only basis for his decision because he had to consider the sentiments of various stakeholders affected by the controversy.

"The NBI report is important for purposes of our consideration, but it is not the only item ... There are many other factors that we have to consider," he said.

Japan's concerns

Brion said concerns had been raised not only by the nursing profession but also by foreign governments.

He said a representative of the Japanese Embassy met with him yesterday morning to express Japan's concern, which stemmed, he said, from the recently forged Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement that allows for the employment of Filipino nurses and caregivers in that country.

Brion said the Philippine labor attache in Brussels also informed him on Tuesday night of a similar concern.

"He asked me what had happened because Brussels is asking. And when you speak of Brussels, you speak of the European Union," Brion said. *With a report from Leila B. Salaverria*

PRC chair displeases Palace; is she on her way out?

From page A1

enough" on the cheating scandal involving the nursing licensure examination.

On Tuesday, Rosero spoke about her differences with Malacañang on the proposed retake of the exam and the "improper" transfer of the PRC from the Office of the President to the Department of Labor and Employment.

She also attacked Labor Secretary Arturo Brion and Commission on Filipinos Overseas Chair Dante Ang for allegedly intruding into and doing a demolition job on the PRC.

EO 565-A

Rosero's statements apparently did not escape the notice of Malacañang, which released yesterday an additional executive order reinforcing that putting the PRC under DOLE supervision.

This time, Executive Order No. 565-A, an amendment of the earlier order, spelled out the "administrative relationship" between the two agencies.

"Indeed it was surprising for an agency head in the executive branch to say something that would somehow go against the grain of a presidential prerogative," Ermita said at his weekly briefing.

"The least that she (Rosero) could have said was for them to await instructions from the Office of the President," he said.

Ermita said he had heard Rosero also say that she was not consulted by the Office of the President (OP) on the executive order.

"[But] it's not for the OP to consult her," he said.

As she sees fit

The amended executive order released by the Palace yesterday states that the President retains the power of control over the PRC but "sees it fit to delegate to the Secretary of Labor and Employment, as the President's alter ego, her control powers over the PRC."

It assigns the labor secretary to:

- Oversee the operations of the PRC and ensure that it is managed effectively and economically, but without interference with day-to-day activities.
- Require the submission of reports and cause the conduct of management audit, performance evaluation and inspection to determine compliance with policies, standards and guidelines of the DOLE.
- Take such action as may be necessary for the proper performance of official functions, including rectification of violations, abuses and other forms of maladministration.
- Review and pass upon budget proposals, but not increase or add to them.

'President torn between being mom and professor'

From page A1

Ms Arroyo's less than decisive stance *vis-à-vis* the proposed retake of the tainted exam, which has sharply divided the nation.

Ermita said Ms Arroyo shared the pain of the parents "who spent so much for their children's education" and who knew fully well "the time and effort that their children had given to the examination, [only to find themselves under threat of investigation] because of the action of a few."

He said this was the reason behind her instruction to the concerned authorities to spare the innocent and punish only those proven guilty.

"We expect the President to hand down her decision as early as Monday," Ermita said.

But meanwhile, according to Yap, Ms Arroyo has had to balance her own views on an issue that she knows would not completely satisfy everyone whichever way she decides.

"As a mother, President Arroyo feels for the parents and students—their misery and anxiety," he said. "She wants to be fair to the examinees who had nothing to do with the leakage and did not benefit from it, as much as she wants the culprits prosecuted under the law."

On the other hand, the President has to struggle with her own professional standards, said Yap, who was one of Ms Arroyo's students when she was teaching economics at Ateneo de Manila University.

"She is a professor as well, and she wants to safeguard the integrity of our nursing licensure examination system, which today is under a grave cloud of doubt," Yap said.

Ermita said Ms Arroyo had taken in stride all criticisms of her perceived flip-flop on the issue.

"But despite the unfair charges, she continues to be sensitive to what she hears and reads," Ermita said.

Balancing all interests

He said this was why Ms Arroyo had "taken pains to address the concerns of all parties by designating [Labor Secretary Arturo Brion as the official] in charge of the details and ordering the National Bureau of Investigation to be more focused in its findings."

Yap said balancing all these interests was "paramount" in the President's mind.

He added: "She does not want to speculate, and she will wait for the Department of Labor and Employment and the NBI to submit their findings, anyway. She has given the DOLE the authority to dispose of this controversy. She will allow designated Cabinet officers to make his or her call on the matter."

The NBI is to submit its findings to the Department of Justice, which will act on its recommendation to file charges against 17 officials of three yet unnamed review centers purportedly responsible for the cheating. *(See banner story on Page A1.)*

The bureau has left it to the DOLE to decide on the issue of the retake. The latter is expected to submit its recommendation on Saturday morning, giving Ms Arroyo the rest of the weekend to decide on the issue.

Solomonic decision

Ermita expressed confidence that the President would come up with a "Solomonic decision."

"She knows she can't please everybody, but ... whatever the decision recommended by the DOLE, it is still her responsibility," he said.

N. Korea warns sanctions mean call to war; Japan bans all imports

From page A1

nounced a total ban on North Korean imports and said ships from the impoverished nation were prohibited from entering Japanese ports as punishment for its apparent nuclear test.

North Korean nationals are also prohibited from entering Japan, with limited exceptions, the Cabinet Office said in a statement released after an emergency security meeting late Wednesday.

"Japan is in gravest danger, if we consider that North Korea has advanced both its missile and nuclear capabilities," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters following the meeting.

The South's Roh said the North was overreacting.

"North Korea says the reason it is pursuing nuclear (weapons) is for its security, but the security threat North Korea speaks of either does not exist in reality, or is very exaggerated," Roh said.

"Excessive armament disrupts the order of peace and hurts trust with neighboring countries, so will lead to a bigger threat."

Seoul to bolster arsenal

South Korea's defense minister yesterday said that Seoul would bolster its conventional arsenal to deal with a potentially nuclear-armed North Korea.

"If North Korea really has (nuclear) capabilities, we will improve and enlarge the number of conventional weapons as long as it doesn't violate the principle of denuclearization," Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung told parliament.

Troop capabilities

Yonhap said that the Joint Chiefs of Staff reported to Yoon the need for verifying and improving troops' capabilities.

The Joint Chiefs raised the need for introducing state-of-the-art weapons capable of destroying the means of delivering nuclear weapons, the report said.

Facing a new nuclear-armed threat, the top US general in South Korea said American forces on the divided peninsula would check any North Korean aggression.

Alarm over second test

"Be assured that the alliance has the forces necessary to deter aggression, and should deterrence fail, decisively defeat any North Korean attack" against South Korea, US Army Gen. B.B. Bell said in a statement to troops. "US forces have been well trained to confront nuclear, biological and chemical threats.'

Worldwide alarm was heightened earlier in the day by reports of a possible second nuclear test. Some say the North Korean regime may conduct more tests amid suspicion the first, relatively small explosion might have partially failed.

Japanese news reports said tremors had been detected that led the Japanese government to suspect North Korea had conducted another nuclear test. A foreign ministry official confirmed Tokyo was looking into a possible second blast.

US and South Korean geological monitors said they had not detected any new seismic activity in communist North Korea, and Japan's prime minister said he had no confirmation of a second blast—a position seconded by the White House.

UN debate

The regional anxiety was reflected Wednesday when Australia's foreign minister said his country was concerned another test might come.

Overnight at the United Nations, the North Korean nuclear crisis settled into a diplomatic debate, with China agreeing to punishment but not severe sanctions backed by the United States, which it said would be too crushing for its impoverished communist ally.

Beijing is seen as having the greatest outside leverage on North Korea as a traditional ally and top provider of badly needed economic and energy aid.

The United States asked the UN Security Council to impose a partial trade embargo including strict limits on Korea's weapons exports and freezing of related financial assets.

Pyongyang has demanded one-on-one talks with Washington and has threatened to launch a nuclear-tipped missile if the US doesn't comply.

Washington insists on the so-called six-party format, where Russia, China, South Korea and Japan have joined the United States in talking to North Korea. *AP*

North unlikely to attack, says defector

A TOP NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR said the North was unlikely to launch a nuclear attack and that China probably wouldn't back tough sanctions.

The communist North "can't immediately use" nuclear weapons, because they are only "intended as a threat," Hwang Jang-yop said in an interview with Freedom North Korea Broadcast, which transmits radio programs aimed at North Koreans.

The 83-year-old Hwang became North Korea's highest-ranking defector in 1997 when he fled to Seoul, where he lives under tight security. He was a former chief of the North's parliament who once mentored North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

"There won't be any change to China's attitude after the nuclear test," Hwang said, claiming there may have been "a tacit agreement" between the neighbors over the test. *AP*

Fourth blast in 2 days rocks South

From page A1

In Manila, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the government "will make sure the perpetrators are hunted down and brought to justice."

She also instructed officials to contact the MILF to assist in the identification and arrest of the bombers. The rebels, who are engaged in peace talks with the government, have denied any terrorism links, but there are concerns some guerrilla elements may be cooperating with militants.

Senior Insp. Samson Obatay, city police spokesperson, said yesterday's attack occurred here at around 11:45 a.m. near a bank and a shopping mall. "Nobody was injured," he said.

He said an attendant of Today's Commercial Store along Don Rufino Alonzo Street saw a man left a bag near their establishment.

"She tried to look at what was inside the bag. And when she felt that something suspicious was inside it, she threw it away. The bag landed in an area where there was nobody around," Obatay said.

Part of wider plot

Obatay said the explosive was fashioned out of an 81-millimeter mortar shells fitted with a timing device, the same type of bomb used in the Makilala and Tacurong attacks. He said the explosion, which caused a minor damage in one of the neighboring stores, was obviously part of a wider plot by terror groups like the JI.

In Makilala, military bomb experts found another improvised explosive device near the site of Tuesday night's blast, said Col. Ruperto Pabustan, commander of the Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade.

Pabustan said bomb experts scouring the periphery of the Makilala town gymnasium found an abandoned bag at around 8 a.m. yesterday. He said the bag contained two 81-mm mortar shells with a mobile phone and a 9-volt battery.

"The perpetrators really planned to maim and kill as many people with these two powerful IEDs," Pabustan told the INQUIRER.

Text message

He said the mobile phone call registry showed more than 20 missed calls, an indication that the perpetrators had intended to detonate the bomb on Tuesday. It also had a text message in the Maguindanao dialect that read: "Where are you? You are the only ones who have not yet detonated (the bomb)."

"Luckily, it did not explode. Had it exploded, there could be hundreds of others killed because the area was so crowded at the time," Pabustan said. "We have not arrested anyone but we are really blaming JI for this," he said.

Makilala was celebrating its 52nd founding day when a bomb exploded in a trade fair near the municipal hall Tuesday night.

Makilala Mayor Onofre Respicio said only six people were killed in Tuesday night's explosion, contrary to his earlier claim that 12 had died.

"The figures of fatalities reached 12 last (Tuesday) night because other dead victims listed in hospitals in Makilala were also listed in other hospitals in nearby Kidapawan City," Respicio said.

Fatalities

Those killed were identified as Wilfredo Singson, 50; Honey Grace Gomez, 29; Romeo Pajugas, 27; Len-Len Tajan-Tajan, all of Makilala; Geralyn Alba of Kidapawan City, and Nelson Turalba of Ecoland, Davao City.

More than 20 others were confirmed wounded, he said.

WEEPING WOMAN with child, Charito Turalba, lost her husband Nelson at the Makilala blast. She has five children with one more on the way. DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Pabustan said the Makilala bombers could be the same group behind the Tacurong City public market blast that left four persons injured on Tuesday.

"They could still be traveling right now," he said.

Pabustan said police and military checkpoints had been set up in strategic areas and all vehicles were being subjected to search.

MILF signature

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said he was more inclined to believe that the Makilala blast was the handiwork of the MILF.

"The bombs used, the way it was detonated had all the signatures of the MILF's previous attacks in the province and elsewhere in the region," Piñol said.

He said the attack only proved that the MILF has not abandoned its terror stance despite the peace process.

The peace talks have hit a snag following disagreements over the concept of the Bangsamoro territory. The MILF wanted more than 1,000 villages for inclusion in the Bangsamoro juridical entity but the government said only around 600 villages are Moro-dominated.

"I'm deeply disappointed because we are talking, we have been communicating and they promised not to use violence in pursuit of their cause and then now they have attacked civilians," Piñol said.

MILF denies involvement

But Eid Kabalu, speaking for the MILF, quickly dismissed Piñol's claim and said the governor had been misinformed.

"Governor Piñol's allegations are sweeping because he made pronouncements even before a formal investigation is conducted," Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

"We don't need things like this, we don't need to use force to pursue our cause ... right now, even if there's impasse in the talks, the ceasefire agreement is in place," he added.

Kabalu also said the MILF does not operate in Makilala, a banana- and rubber-producing town, which is a former lair of communist rebels.

Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, said his group was condemning the bomb attacks.

"The leadership of the MILF condemns the bombing. We dislike this kind of act. Political problems cannot be solved through such actions, which are anti-people," he said.

Jaafar said the MILF is also ready to extend help to bring the culprits before justice. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Charlie C. Señase, Jeoffrey Maitem, Julie S. Alipala, Jeffrey M. Tupas, Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao, AP, Reuters*

AFP blames Abu Sayyaf . . .

From page A1

for the arrest of Istiada Binti Oemar Sovie, wife of JI bomber Dulmatin, in Patikul, Sulu, last Oct. 3.

"She said they have intentions to launch terrorist attacks in Mindanao because we have been supporting the worldwide coalition against terrorism," Esperon said.

Sovie and her two children, aged 6 and 8, were taken in for alleged violation of immigration laws.

Under interrogation, Sovie confirmed that her husband, Janjalani, and Patek were still in Patikul, officials claimed.

Oplan Ultimatum

Esperon added that the bombings were meant as a "diversionary tactic" to take the heat off the "intense" operations launched by the AFP against the JI and the ASG in Jolo.

"It's also possible that since August when we launched our operations in Jolo called Oplan Ultimatum, they want to divert our attention, to ease our efforts (in Jolo). But we will not ease our operations in Jolo," Esperon said.

He said two more soldiers were killed in a pre-dawn encounter with the Islamic extremists in Sulu yesterday.

The operation in Jolo was launched to flush out and capture JI members Dulmatin and Umar Patek, both said to be involved in the 2002 Bali bombing, and ASG leader Khadaffy Janjalani. The military said Janjalani was aiding the two JI members.

Esperon said that the military knew terror groups would launch bombing attacks. Intelligence reports said other targets were Cotabato City, Zamboanga City and Carmen, Cotabato, he said.

Heightened alert

The AFP said the military in Mindanao had already gone on heightened alert. "In fact they have been in that status since we launched Oplan Ultimatum in Jolo. We knew that while we close in on them, they might launch other actions in other places so the pressure eases in Jolo."

Esperon said there were other reasons for the attacks, including the disruption of peace process by rogue elements of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The government has been trying to forge a peace accord with the MILF. But the talks bogged down on the issue of "ancestral lands."

"We will give it our best to foil any more attacks. We can't assure 100 percent we can prevent this, but we will do what we can with the assistance and coordination of the Philippine National Police and other law enforcement agencies," he said.

Muslim leaders and lawmakers denounced as an act of terrorism the bombings in Mindanao.

MILF should surrender bombers

If police could prove that the MILF was behind the attacks, it should surrender the perpetrators, Anak Mindanao party-list Rep. Mujiv Hataman said. "Those persons behind the attacks are enemies of the state and the people. This is unforgivable," said Hataman.

Hataman called on the authorities and the MILF to conduct separate and thorough investigations and stop issuing "premature statements without the benefit of a comprehensive and exhaustive probe." He said this would only complicate peace talks.

In a joint statement, other Mindanao lawmakers condemned the twin blasts as "brazen and barbaric" and expressed hope the incidents would convince opposition senators to soften their stance on the antiterror bill and support its passage now.

House Deputy Majority Leader Antonio Cerilles of Zamboanga del Sur and Rep. Douglas Cagas of Davao del Sur said the bomb attacks were "clearly the handiwork of terrorists taunting the government and pushing the public into a panic mode." *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño*

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Schedule of Special Events

OCTOBER 12, 2006
THURSDAY

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
(Hall 3 Entrance)
Opening Ceremonies

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Music and Meditations
by Crossover
sponsored by Church Strengthening Ministry, Inc.

4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
(Function Room A)
Book Launching of "They Have Jesus" by Mr. Joey Velasco to be followed by the Opening of the Artwork Exhibit of Mr. Joey Velasco at the Art Asia Gallery Art Walk, 4F SM Megamall Bldg B (By Invitation only) by The Catholic Book Center

5:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Launching of "Once Upon a Time in ASIA: Stories of Harmony and Peace" by Fr. James H. Kroeger with Jason K. Dy, SJ sponsored by Claretian Publications and Jesuit Communications

6:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Launching of the "COMPENDIUM OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH"
by Word and Life Publications

7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Seminar / Workshop "Up-to-date Catholic Religious Formation"
by Word and Life Publications

OCTOBER 13, 2006
FRIDAY

10:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.
(Activity Area)
Book Launching of "Exorcism"
by Shepherd's Voice Publications, Inc

3:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Video Presentation.
Superbook by Church Strengthening Ministry, Inc

6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
(Function Room A)
Book Launching of "REAL TIME"
by Church Strengthening Ministry, Inc
(By Invitation only)

OCTOBER 14, 2006
SATURDAY

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
(Activity Area)
Book Launching
by St Pauls

1:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Launching and Presentation of "Gospel Komiks Collectors' Edition" by Communication Foundation for Asia (CFA)

3:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Music and Meditations
by Jam for Breakfast
sponsored by Church Strengthening Ministry, Inc.

6:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Mini-Concert
by Noel Cabangon
presented by Jesuit Communications

OCTOBER 15, 2006
SUNDAY

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
(Activity Area)
Storytelling Sessions
by Vibal Publishing House

1:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Video Presentation:
Flying House by Church Strengthening Ministry, Inc

3:00 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.
(Activity Area)
Music and Meditations
by Crossover
sponsored by Church Strengthening Ministry, Inc

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Cebu - Kuala Lumpur					
MH707 (Mon/Wed)	1600	1945	MH706 (Mon/Wed)	1110	1505
Manila - Kota Kinabalu			Kota Kinabalu - Manila		
MH703 (Wed/Sat)	1520	1720	MH702 (Wed/Sat)	1240	1430
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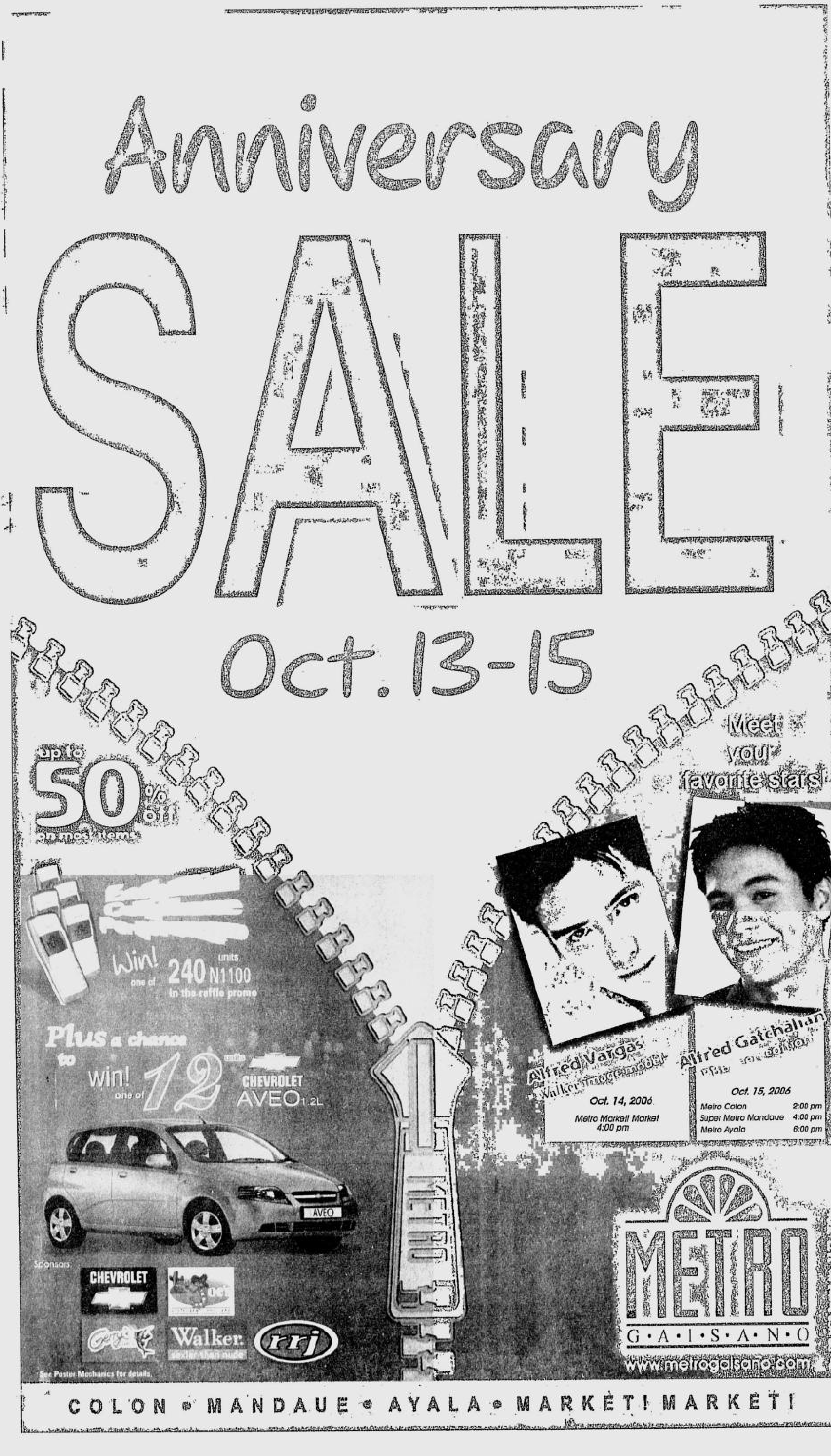

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Labor chief hurdles CA; Teves stalled

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

LABOR SECRETARY ARTURO BRION, THE man in charge of deciding the fate of examinees tainted by reports of cheating in the nursing board exam, was confirmed yesterday by the Commission on Appointments in its last hearing before Congress goes on a three-week recess.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves was not as lucky. The CA bypassed his nomination after CA vice chair Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. and Rep. Rolex Suplico posed vigorous objections.

Teves would have to be reappointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo for the CA to tackle his nomination possibly at the resumption of sessions starting Nov. 6.

The CA committee on finance, chaired by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile earlier deferred Teves' nomination after an oppositor, Daniel Romana, said Teves must answer allegations of wrongdoing during his stint as president of the Land Bank of the Philippines.

Romana said he was unable to withdraw from LBP the proceeds of land he sold in Palawan.

Pichay said the House panel in the CA still had some other issues about Teves and said his confirmation could be tackled at the resumption of sessions.

Meanwhile, Brion went home happy after the CA gave him its nod, despite opposition made on Tuesday by DOLE Employees Union president Elvira Prudencio and lawyer Rene Saguisag.

Prudencio wanted Brion to recognize the DOLEEU while Saguisag, lawyer of nurses seeking to be given their oaths despite the leakage controversy, questioned Brion's "seeming gross insensitivity" to the plight of nurses.

Sen. Mar Roxas said Brion is a welcome addition to the Cabinet because of his "wealth of experience in labor relations and his stature as a legal luminary."

DSWD to go for graft-free relief work

By Cynthia D. Balana

SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT Secretary Esperanza Cabral yesterday issued guidelines on the monitoring of disaster operations of the department by its Inter-Faith partners to prevent graft and ensure that relief goods are received by intended beneficiaries.

The DSWD is the chair of the National Committee on Disaster Response of the National Disaster Coordinating Council through which donations for disaster victims are coursed.

The guidelines, embodied in Administrative Order No. 8 entitled "Guidelines on the Monitoring of Disaster Relief Distribution under the DSWD Inter-Faith Groups Partnership" was also meant to promote efficiency and integrity in DSWD relief operations.

Cabral said the guidelines concretized the partnership undertaken last year by the DSWD and the Inter-Faith groups composed of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the Philippine Relief and Development Services (PHILRADS) and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) for the monitoring of DSWD relief operations.

She said the department recognized the role of non-governmental organizations in strengthening disaster response, particularly in the delivery of emergency relief assistance.

Ex-press secretary heads Philpost

By Christine O. Avendaño

FORMER PRESS SECRETARY HECTOR VILlanueva is the new Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer of the Philippine Postal Corporation.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday announced the appointment of Villanueva and six other heads of various government agencies.

"Villanueva's appointment is expected to reinforce PhilPost's modernization program to increase its revenues which had been on the downtrend due to its outmoded systems and equipment," said a Palace statement.

Ermita also announced the appointment of the following:

- Edgardo Gurrea, chair, government of the Republic of the Philippines coordination committee on cessation of hostilities;
- Mamintal Adiong Jr.,—member, representing the business community, ARMM Social Fund Project;
- Sakina Bernan—member, representing the women's organization, ARMM Social Fund Project;
- Rockman Sampulna—member, representing the civil society organization, ARMM Social Fund Project;
- Vicente Julian Sarza—chief privatization officer, Privatization and Management Office, Department of Finance
- Virgilio Leyretana—chair, Mindanao Economic and Development Council

AT IT AGAIN

Lozano files impeach case vs Ombudsman

By Philip C. Tubeza

LAWYER OLIVER Lozano yesterday filed an impeachment complaint against Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez for "grave abuse of discretion amounting to betrayal of public trust" for clearing Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos and other election officials in the failed P1.3 billion Mega Pacific poll automation deal.

In a complaint affidavit sent by mail, Lozano said Gutierrez deserved to be impeached for declaring Abalos and other Comelec officials not liable for the deal which the Supreme Court had voided in 2004 for violating the Comelec's own bidding rules.

"The Ombudsman cannot reverse the final ruling of the Supreme Court by claiming lack of malice [on the part of the accused]," Lozano said.

"The Ombudsman has thus committed grave abuse of discretion amounting to betrayal of public trust," he said.

However, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles noted that no congressman has endorsed Lozano complaint.

"Apparently, he mailed his impeachment complaint and it has not yet been received by the House secretary general," Nograles said.

"Without any endorsement from a House member, it will be mailed back to him 'Return to Sender.' The rules specify that you need at least one congressman to endorse it," he said.

Nograles said that even the House minority apparently was "not comfortable" with Lozano who beat the opposition into filing a badly prepared impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo last year causing it to be dismissed on a technicality.

"The administration and the House majority also do not want to support him. That looks like the situation here," he said.

On Tuesday, Lozano also re-filed his impeachment complaint against Abalos and other Comelec commissioners for the same Mega Pacific deal, but it also did not have any endorsers.

Abalos was unperturbed, saying that for an impeachment case to prosper, it must be determined to be sufficient in form and substance.

"There will be no more substance in his complaint as the Ombudsman has already cleared us of any wrongdoing," he said.

When Lozano last filed the complaint, there were no endorsers, "more so now," Abalos said in a phone interview.

Pro, anti groups submit Cha-cha positions to SC

By Armand N. Nocum and Jerome Aning

VARIOUS PRO AND ANTI-CHARTER change proponents submitted their respective arguments yesterday regarding the legality of a 'people's initiative' as a means of amending the constitution, beating an Oct. 11 deadline set by the Supreme Court.

The high court will deliberate on their petitions and make a final ruling, possibly in a month's time, on the administration-backed move to collect over six million signatures to call for Charter change despite an earlier SC ruling pointing out that there is yet no enabling law to implement such an initiative.

On the pro side are petitioners Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) which claim they have complied with the three percent signature requirement per congressional districts to push for the people's initiative mode of changing the Constitution.

In their 97-page memorandum , Sigaw and ULAP asked the High Court to junk the petition of the anti Charter change groups and order the Comelec to schedule a plebiscite in 60-90 days, on the grounds that the Comelec had committed a "grave abuse of discretion" in rejecting their petition.

Sigaw and ULAP also cited the Comelec's issuance of a memo confirming the authority of election officers to verify signatures in the ordinary course of the performance of their administrative functions. They pointed out that due process necessarily requires that the Comelec election officers, whose official acts have been impugned (by anti Charter change proponents), be granted reasonable opportunity to defend their actions.

On the other hand, anti Charter change petitioner OneVoice, in its own memorandum to the Supreme Court, cited "serious questions of law" and the group's discovery of alleged fabricated signatures and other irregularities in the certificates and signature sheets submitted by Sigaw ng Bayan to the Comelec.

"We believe that the signature gathering process of Sigaw was marked by fraud and deception, and fatally flawed for lack of a legally authorized process," OneVoice chair Christian Monsod said.

Senate OKs biofuels act

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE SENATE LAST night approved the Biofuels Act, paving the way for the enactment possibly next month of the law mandating the use of alternative fuel in the transport system.

With a vote of 19-0 and no abstention, the Senate passed on third and final reading Senate Bill 2226, a Malacañang-certified urgent measure which aims to reduce the country's dependence on imported fuel, reduce pollution caused by fossil fuels and spur the growth of the agriculture sector.

The Senate version mandates the use of a minimum of 5 percent bioethanol blended gasoline and 1 percent biodiesel blend on fuel products sold to the country's 5.2 million vehicles upon short conference," Santiago said. She earlier said the law could be in effect before the end of the year.

Abalos: No massive cheating in '04

By Armand N. Nocum

COMELEC CHAIR BENJAMIN ABALOS YESTERDAY denied that there was massive cheating in the 2004 elections and also criticized the media for not doing its job and coming up with the election results instead of criticizing the poll body.

Emerging from a two-hour grilling by the Supreme Court acting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, Abalos urged the public to "not be speculative" and leave the questions about cheating to the PET.

He appeared at a PET hearing on the electoral protest filed by defeated vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda where he denied claims of widespread disparity in the number of returns during the 2004 elections.

Abalos also downplayed the significance of his testimony yesterday, which he gave only after being issued two subpoenas by the PET.

"All I did was to identify the markings on the documents that we brought," he said, adding that the documents from Congress were not in yet.

He discounted claims of supposed discrepancies in the copies of official election documents filed before the Comelec and with the House of Representatives.

Abalos denied that irregularities occurred in Balindong and Tacara in Lanao province.

"With two certificates of canvass, it is natural that one will not jibe with the other. One was for the first (regular) election, the other for the subsequent (special) elections. Therefore, they will not jibe, that was explained," Abalos said.

He also defended his decision to conduct a private tally of the election results.

"Don't be hypocritical. If you are resourceful members of the media, all you have to do is add all these figures together, then you will have the results. The problem is, you don't do it, and I did, then I get blamed. I never made it public. Based on my tally, we have the same figures with that of Congress," he told justice reporters.

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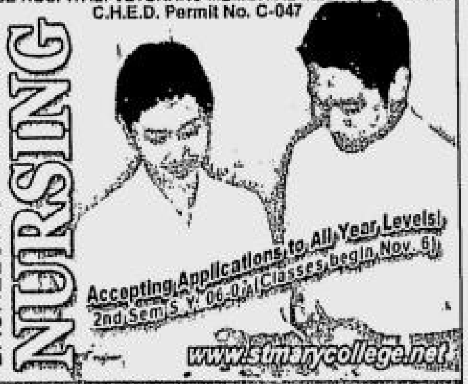

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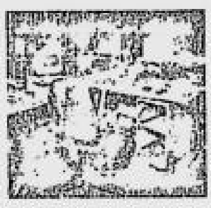
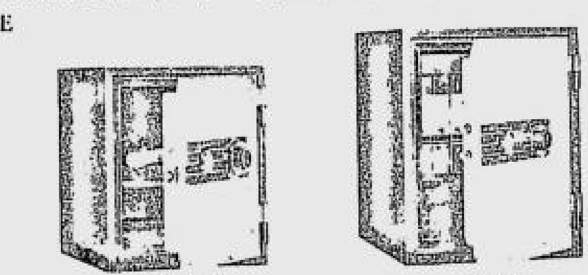

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Life-changing stories of service, integrity and trust retold

Bong Concepcion, 30
Tricycle driver

"May sampung taon na akong tricycle driver. Kahit hirap, nabubuhay ko pa rin ang aking pamilya. May mga araw na mahina ang kita, dala na rin ng madalas na pagtaas ng krudo. Dahil dito, kakaunti lang ang naiipon ko. Kaya kapag nagkakasabay-sabay ang mga gastusin, kadalasan ay nababalisa ako sa kahahanap ng mapagkukunan ng pera.

Naalala ko nang minsang kinapos ako sa pera. Hindi ako nakapamasada dahil nasira ang aking motor. Siyempre, ang laki ng panghihinayang ko sa hindi ko kinita noong araw na iyon. Sa kasamaang-palad, sumabay pa ang pagkaka-ospital ng aming bunso dahil sa dengue.

Madali kong nasolusyunan ang sira ng motorsiklo ko. Mabuti na lang at napakiusapan ko 'yong kumpare kong mekaniko na ayusin ito ng libre. Halos wala rin akong ginastos sa mga kinailangang palitan na parts. Talagang sa pagpapagamot ng aking anak naubos ang kakaunting naipon ko. Mga bayarin sa ospital at pambili sa mga kinailangang antibiotics at bitamina ang gumulo sa isip ko. Walang-wala akong pera noong panahong iyon. Gayunpaman, hindi ko kayang balewalain ang kalusugan ng aking anak.

Matagal ko nang nakikita ang Tambunting Pawnshop sa aming barangay. Hindi ko inakalang ito pa pala ang makakatulong sa akin.

May pag-aalinlangan ako noong sinangla ko ang aming colored TV. Natakot ako na baka hindi presyuhan ng Tambunting ng tama iyon. Maling-mali ako. ***Sa aking transaksyon sa Tambunting, napatunayan ko ang integridad ng kumpanya – tama ang kanilang pagpresyo at walang kahirap-hirap ko ding nakuha ang pera para sa gamot ng aking anak.*** *Pagkaraan ng tatlong linggo, natubos ko na ang aming TV na wala ring kahirap-hirap.*

Panalangin ko na hindi na ako muling maharap sa kalagayang tulad noon. Pero kung muling magipit ako sa pera, hindi na ako gaano mag aalinlangan. Dahil alam kong may Tambunting Pawnshop na may integridad sa kanilang serbisyo, na aking malalapitan at maaasahan."

Amanda Cruz, 39
Owner, Madz Sari-sari Store

"Malaki ang pasasalamat ko sa Tambunting sa pagtulong sa pagpapalago ng aking negosyo. Parang isang kasosyong kumpare ang pawnshop na ito. Napatunayan ng Tambunting na anumang oras, sila'y handang tumulong.

Noong isang taon, nagkaroon ako ng malaking pagkakataong makapagbenta ng ice cream, ice candy, yelo at iba pang palamig. Tag-init na noon at bakasyon na ang mga bata. Suwerte pa't may isang tindahan ng freezer na nagbagsak ng presyo. Ayokong sayangin ang pagkakataong iyon, lalo na't alam kong madali kong mababawi ang aking puhunan. Kaya naman kaagad akong nagpareserba ng isang freezer. Ang problema, kulang na kulang ang naitabi kong pera para sa down payment.

Lunes ng umaga ang ibinigay sa aking deadline ng nagbebenta ng freezer. Ang sabi sa akin ng may-ari, kung hindi ako makakapag-down payment ng Lunes, wala siyang magagawa kundi ibenta sa iba ang ipinareserba kong freezer.

Linggo ng alas-6 ng gabi na nang maisipan kong isangla ang aking bisikleta. Nagmadali akong pumunta sa Tambunting branch sa aming barangay. Laking gulat at ginhawa ang aking naramdaman nang makita kong bukas pa ito. Napag-alaman ko na bukas pala ang Tambunting araw-araw mula alas-10 ng umaga hanggang alas-7 ng gabi. Kakaiba talaga ang serbisyo ng Tambunting Pawnshop. Pagkaraan ng ilang minuto, dala-dala ko na pauwi ang down payment para sa freezer.

Dahil sa el niño, grabe ang init noong taong iyon kaya naman patok na patok ang mga paninda ko. Tama rin ang naging hinala ko na madali kong mababawi ang pinuhunan ko sa freezer. Pagkaraan ng ilang linggo, natubos ko na rin ang aking bisikleta.

Sa tulong ng Tambunting, unti-unti ko pang napadami ang aking paninda. Ngayon, nagbebenta na rin ako ng bigas, load sa cellphone, gas at ilang RTW. *Sa katunayan, malapit na akong magbukas ng isa pang tindahan, at ang panganay ko naman ang magma-manage nito."*

Emiralda T. Leveriza, 38
Mother of 5 kids

"Mahirap maging isang ina. Pero mas mahirap kung kailangan mong tumayo bilang ina at ama ng iyong pamilya.

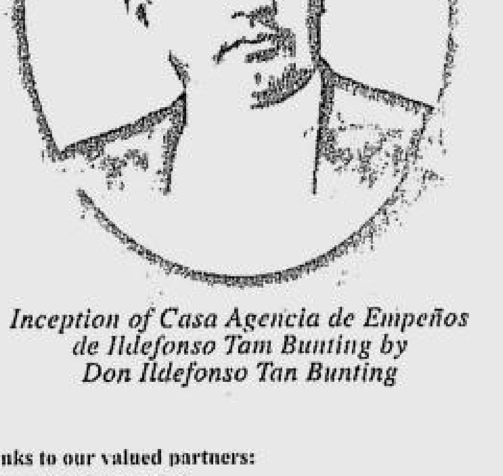
Ganyan ang nangyari sa akin noong namatay ang asawa ko. Habang naghihirap ang aking kalooban dahil sa kanyang pagpanaw, kinailangan kong tustusan ang aming pang araw-araw na gastusin. Mabuti na lang, may naitabi kaming konting pera ng aking asawa. Ngunit dahil sa hirap ng buhay, mabilis ring naubos 'yon.

Bilang isang magulang, mahalaga sa akin na mapag-aral ko ang aking mga anak. Kaya naman kahit hiyang-hiya ako, kung sinu-sino pa din ang nilapitan ko noong panahon ng enrolment. Kahit paano, may nahiraman ako ng pera, pero hindi pa din ito naging sapat. Sinubukan ko ding lapitan ang principal ng kolehiyo para humingi ng palugit. Awa ng Diyos, binigyan niya ako ng isa pang linggo para makapaghanap ng mapagkukunan ng pang-matrikula. Kakaibang kalungkutan ang aking nadama noong mga panahong iyon. Awang-awa ako sa panganay ko. Ayaw kong hindi siya makapasok sa unang semester ng kanyang ikatlong taon sa nursing. Masipag at matalino pa naman siya. Naintindihan naman niya ang sitwasyon, nguni't hindi ko pa rin matanggap na maaaring kailanganin niyang tumigil sa pag-aaral.

Nagkaroon ako ng pag-asa nang makausap ko ang aking kumare. Kamakailan lang ay kinailangan rin niya ng malaking pera, at Tambunting ang nakatulong sa kanya. ***Nang marinig ko iyon, dali-dali kong dinala ang aking alahas sa Tambunting Pawnshop sa aming barangay. Mabilis at naging maayos naman ang transaksyon. Agad-agad akong pumunta sa eskwela, bitbit ang pangmatrikula ng aking anak, bitbit rin ang bagong pag-asa para sa aming mag-anak.*** *Ilang ulit pa akong lumapit sa Tambunting, at hindi ako kailanman nabigo. Kaya naman ang laki talaga ng tiwala ko sa Tambunting. Kung wala ang Tambunting, hindi ko alam kung paano ko napagtapos ang anak ko.*

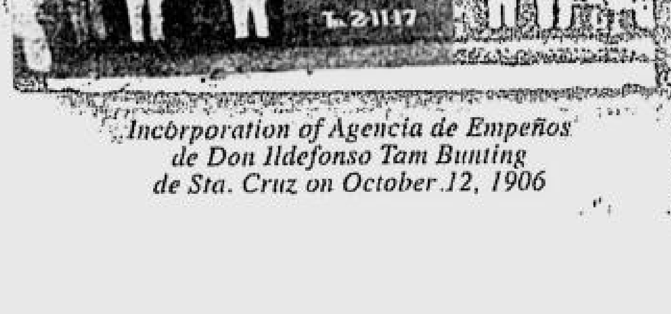
Ngayon, mas maayos na ang lagay ng buhay namin. Nguni't hindi ko kailanman makakalimutan ang tulong sa akin at sa aking pamilya ng Tambunting."

Tambunting Milestones 1906-2006

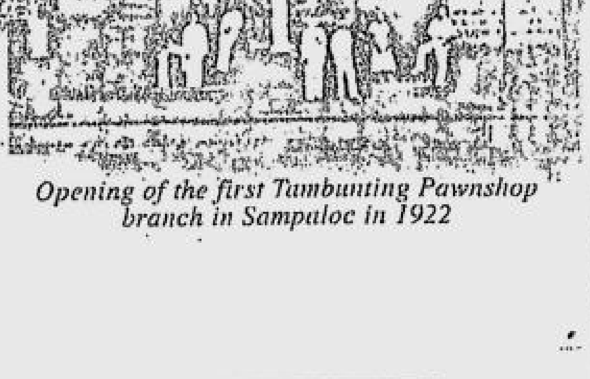


Inception of Casa Agencia de Empeños de Ildefonso Tam Bunting by Don Ildefonso Tan Bunting

Establishment of Agencia de Empeños, the first pawnshop in Tondo, on March 4, 1896



Incorporation of Agencia de Empeños de Don Ildefonso Tam Bunting de Sta. Cruz on October 12, 1906



Opening of the first Tambunting Pawnshop branch in Sampaloc in 1922

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"May sampung taon na akong tricycle driver. Kahit hirap, nabubuhay ko pa rin ang aking pamilya. May mga araw na mahina ang kita, dala na rin ng madalas na pagtaas ng krudo. Dahil dito, kakaunti lang ang naiipon ko. Kaya kapag nagkakasabay-sabay ang mga gastusin, kadalasan ay nababalisa ako sa kahahanap ng mapagkukunan ng pera.

Naalala ko nang minsang kinapos ako sa pera. Hindi ako nakapamasada dahil nasira ang aking motor. Siyempre, ang laki ng panghihinayang ko sa hindi ko kinita noong araw na iyon. Sa kasamaang-palad, sumabay pa ang pagkaka-ospital ng aming bunso dahil sa dengue.

Madali kong nasolusyunan ang sira ng motorsiklo ko. Mabuti na lang at napakiusapan ko 'yong kumpare kong mekaniko na ayusin ito ng libre. Halos wala rin akong ginastos sa mga kinailangang palitan na parts. Talagang sa pagpapagamot ng aking anak naubos ang kakaunting naipon ko. Mga bayarin sa ospital at pambili sa mga kinailangang antibiotics at bitamina ang gumulo sa isip ko. Walang-wala akong pera noong panahong iyon. Gayunpaman, hindi ko kayang balewalain ang kalusugan ng aking anak.

Matagal ko nang nakikita ang Tambunting Pawnshop sa aming barangay. Hindi ko inakalang ito pa pala ang makakatulong sa akin.

May pag-aalinlangan ako noong sinangla ko ang aming colored TV. Natakot ako na baka hindi presyuhan ng Tambunting ng tama iyon. Maling-mali ako. ***Sa aking transaksyon sa Tambunting, napatunayan ko ang integridad ng kumpanya – tama ang kanilang pagpresyo at walang kahirap-hirap ko ding nakuha ang pera para sa gamot ng aking anak.*** *Pagkaraan ng tatlong linggo, natubos ko na ang aming TV na wala ring kahirap-hirap.*

Panalangin ko na hindi na ako muling maharap sa kalagayang tulad noon. Pero kung muling magipit ako sa pera, hindi na ako gaano mag aalinlangan. Dahil alam kong may Tambunting Pawnshop na may integridad sa kanilang serbisyo, na aking malalapitan at maaasahan."

Amanda Cruz, 39
Owner, Madz Sari-sari Store

"Malaki ang pasasalamat ko sa Tambunting sa pagtulong sa pagpapalago ng aking negosyo. Parang isang kasosyong kumpare ang pawnshop na ito. Napatunayan ng Tambunting na anumang oras, sila'y handang tumulong.

Noong isang taon, nagkaroon ako ng malaking pagkakataong makapagbenta ng ice cream, ice candy, yelo at iba pang palamig. Tag-init na noon at bakasyon na ang mga bata. Suwerte pa't may isang tindahan ng freezer na nagbagsak ng presyo. Ayokong sayangin ang pagkakataong iyon, lalo na't alam kong madali kong mababawi ang aking puhunan. Kaya naman kaagad akong nagpareserba ng isang freezer. Ang problema, kulang na kulang ang naitabi kong pera para sa down payment.

Lunes ng umaga ang ibinigay sa aking deadline ng nagbebenta ng freezer. Ang sabi sa akin ng may-ari, kung hindi ako makakapag-down payment ng Lunes, wala siyang magagawa kundi ibenta sa iba ang ipinareserba kong freezer.

Linggo ng alas-6 ng gabi na nang maisipan kong isangla ang aking bisikleta. Nagmadali akong pumunta sa Tambunting branch sa aming barangay. Laking gulat at ginhawa ang aking naramdaman nang makita kong bukas pa ito. Napag-alaman ko na bukas pala ang Tambunting araw-araw mula alas-10 ng umaga hanggang alas-7 ng gabi. Kakaiba talaga ang serbisyo ng Tambunting Pawnshop. Pagkaraan ng ilang minuto, dala-dala ko na pauwi ang down payment para sa freezer.

Dahil sa el niño, grabe ang init noong taong iyon kaya naman patok na patok ang mga paninda ko. Tama rin ang naging hinala ko na madali kong mababawi ang pinuhunan ko sa freezer. Pagkaraan ng ilang linggo, natubos ko na rin ang aking bisikleta.

Sa tulong ng Tambunting, unti-unti ko pang napadami ang aking paninda. Ngayon, nagbebenta na rin ako ng bigas, load sa cellphone, gas at ilang RTW. *Sa katunayan, malapit na akong magbukas ng isa pang tindahan, at ang panganay ko naman ang magma-manage nito."*

Emiralda T. Leveriza, 38
Mother of 5 kids

"Mahirap maging isang ina. Pero mas mahirap kung kailangan mong tumayo bilang ina at ama ng iyong pamilya.

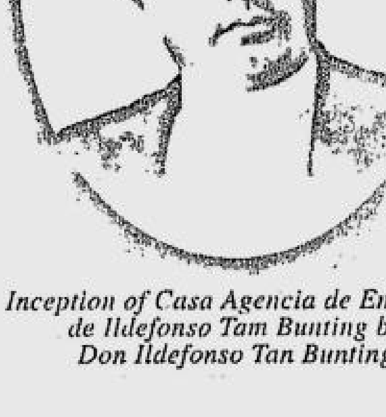
Ganyan ang nangyari sa akin noong namatay ang asawa ko. Habang naghihirap ang aking kalooban dahil sa kanyang pagpanaw, kinailangan kong tustusan ang aming pang araw-araw na gastusin. Mabuti na lang, may naitabi kaming konting pera ng aking asawa. Ngunit dahil sa hirap ng buhay, mabilis ring naubos 'yon.

Bilang isang magulang, mahalaga sa akin na mapag-aral ko ang aking mga anak. Kaya naman kahit hiyang-hiya ako, kung sinu-sino pa din ang nilapitan ko noong panahon ng enrolment. Kahit paano, may nahiraman ako ng pera, pero hindi pa din ito naging sapat. Sinubukan ko ding lapitan ang principal ng kolehiyo para humingi ng palugit. Awa ng Diyos, binigyan niya ako ng isa pang linggo para makapaghanap ng mapagkukunan ng pang-matrikula. Kakaibang kalungkutan ang aking nadama noong mga panahong iyon. Awang-awa ako sa panganay ko. Ayaw kong hindi siya makapasok sa unang semester ng kanyang ikatlong taon sa nursing. Masipag at matalino pa naman siya. Naintindihan naman niya ang sitwasyon, nguni't hindi ko pa rin matanggap na maaaring kailanganin niyang tumigil sa pag-aaral.

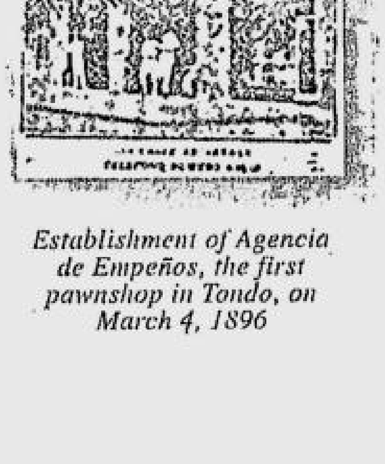
Nagkaroon ako ng pag-asa nang makausap ko ang aking kumare. Kamakailan lang ay kinailangan rin niya ng malaking pera, at Tambunting ang nakatulong sa kanya. ***Nang marinig ko iyon, dali-dali kong dinala ang aking alahas sa Tambunting Pawnshop sa aming barangay. Mabilis at naging maayos naman ang transaksyon. Agad-agad akong pumunta sa eskwela, bitbit ang pangmatrikula ng aking anak, bitbit rin ang bagong pag-asa para sa aming mag-anak.*** *Ilang ulit pa akong lumapit sa Tambunting, at hindi ako kailanman nabigo. Kaya naman ang laki talaga ng tiwala ko sa Tambunting. Kung wala ang Tambunting, hindi ko alam kung paano ko napagtapos ang anak ko.*

Ngayon, mas maayos na ang lagay ng buhay namin. Nguni't hindi ko kailanman makakalimutan ang tulong sa akin at sa aking pamilya ng Tambunting."

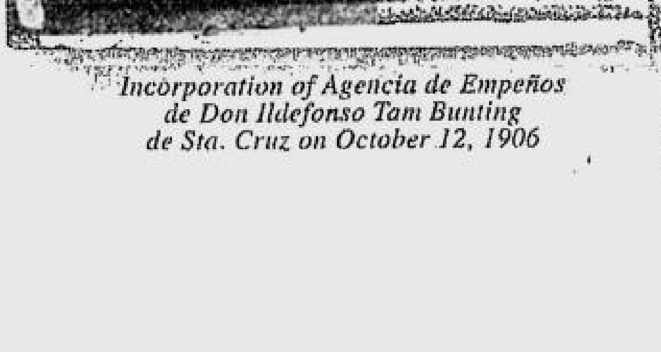
Tambunting Milestones 1906-2006



Inception of Casa Agencia de Empeños de Ildefonso Tam Bunting by Don Ildefonso Tan Bunting



Establishment of Agencia de Empeños, the first pawnshop in Tondo, on March 4, 1896



Incorporation of Agencia de Empeños de Don Ildefonso Tam Bunting de Sta. Cruz on October 12, 1906

Opening of the first Tambunting Pawnshop branch in Sampaloc in 1922

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100 Years

urther expanded the business. In 1935, he opened his own
unting Pawnshop in San Juan, Rizal, where it continued to
le aid and hope to many.

During the Japanese occupation, the company was one of the
proprietors that was able to endure massive inflation and
nent bankruptcy. Proving its resilience, the family-operated
ess survived World War II and reopened with the protected
alued collaterals of its faithful partners still intact.

In a matter of years, trusted branches spread throughout Metro
la, bringing the appreciated service of Tambunting to more
nore sectors of the public.

Today, the seven children of Don Antonio carry the time-
ed tradition and culture of Tambunting Pawnshop. Championed
organization's conviction of "Primero el Publico, despues
ros" (The Public First Before Us), Tambunting now has over
isand branches nationwide assisting those with financial needs.

The name "Tambunting" has come to be greatly identified
ntegrity, service and trust. Having weathered time and trials,
till remaining true to its mission and purpose, Tambunting
shop turns one hundred years old. Indeed, it is a historical
tone worthy of utmost recognition.

TAMBUNTING
100
1906-2006
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INTEGRITY
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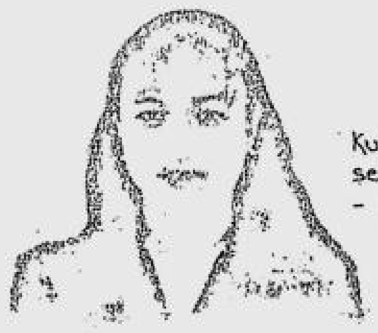
Tambunting Pawnshop Commemorative Logo

The logo combines elements that form a seal of excellent service. The prominent free-flowing ribbon signifies an award for quality and distinction. The ribbon also forms the infinity sign and the Yin Yang symbol. The infinity sign symbolizes the company's everlasting commitment to service, while the Yin Yang represents the balance between the financial and social sides of the business, which Tambunting immensely values. The social aspect is a characteristic the company has built through personal relationships with its clients, a mark befitting a Filipino company that has made a tremendous contribution to society and to the local economy for 100 years.

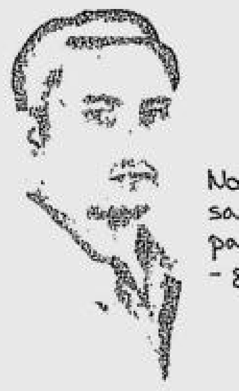
SA ORAS NG PANGANGAILANGAN,
IISA ANG KANILANG NAASAHAN.

TAMBUNTING PAWNSHOP



Kundi sa tulong ng Tambunting, hindi makakapasok ngayong semester ang anak ko.
- Lilian, may anak na nasa high school

Lumapit ako sa Tambunting nung Kinailangan Kong ipaayos yung makina ng taxi Ko.
- Mario, taxi owner & driver



Noong nanakawan yung tindahan Ko, Tambunting ang nakatulong sa akin. Agad Kong na-replenish ang inventory Kaya nakapag-deliver pa rin ako ng mga order.
- Ernesto, may-ari ng mini-grocery

Hindi ako makakatapos ng kolehiyo kung hindi sa tulong ng Tambunting.
- Ben, Engineering Graduate

Sa Tambunting, nakuha ko ang perang pambayad sa aking placement fee papuntang U.S.
- Lyn, nurse

SA LOOB NG ISANG DAANG TAON, MARAMING HENERASYON NA NG MGA PILIPINO ANG KANILANG NATULUNGAN — MGA NAITAWID SA KAHIRAPAN AT KAGIPITAN. IYAN ANG TAMBUNTING PAWNSHOP. MULA NOON HANGGANG NGAYON, MAAASAHAN NG BAWA'T PILIPINO SA ANUMANG ORAS NG PANGANGAILANGAN.

100
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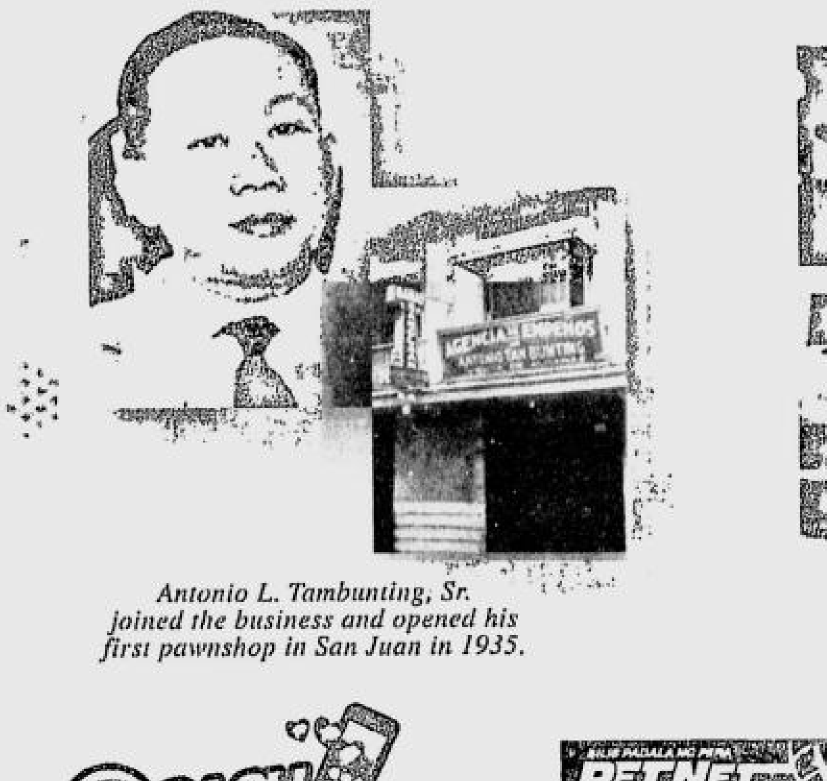
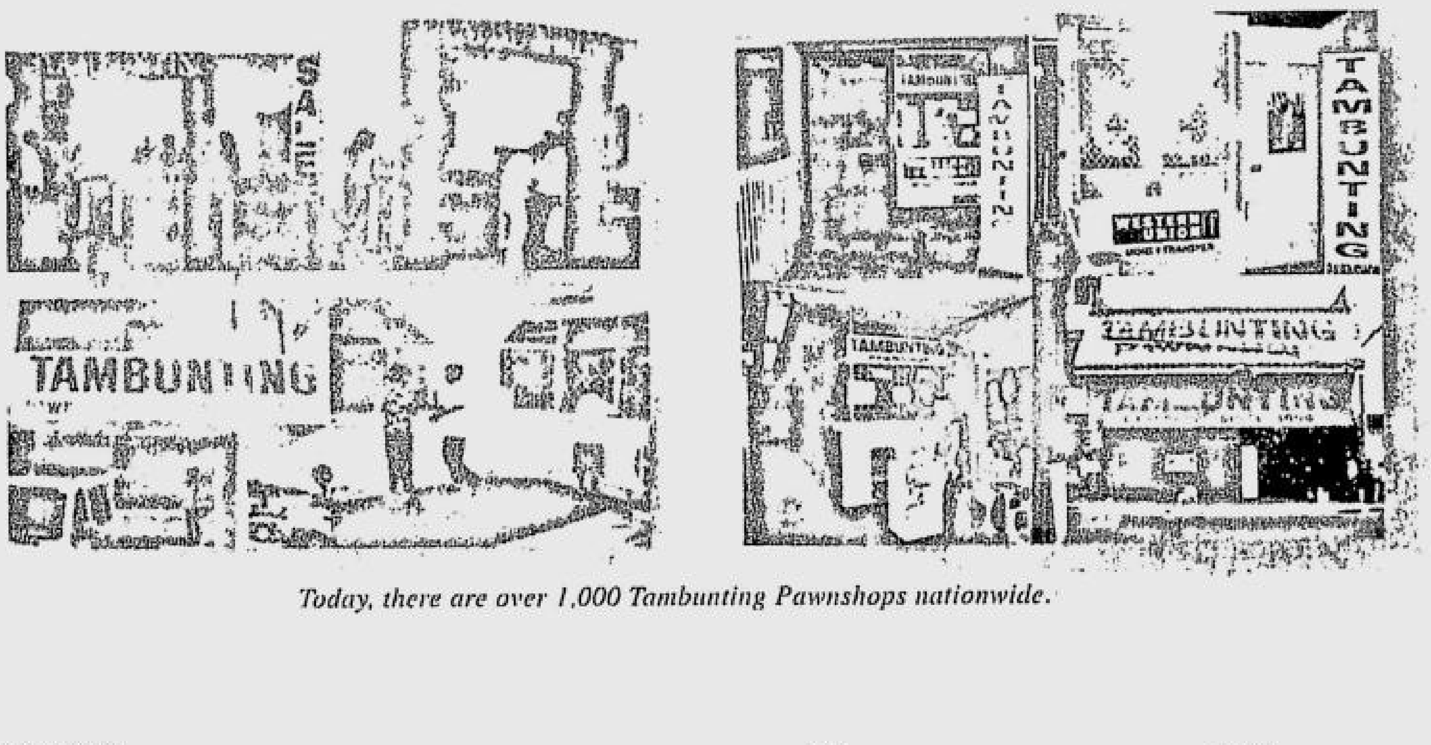


Antonio L. Tambunting, Sr. joined the business and opened his first pawnshop in San Juan in 1935.



Today, there are over 1,000 Tambunting Pawnshops nationwide.

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The Court did it

EDITORIAL

THEY ARE NOT ANNOUNCING IT YET, BUT THE great legal minds who inhabit the Office of the Ombudsman have solved one of the greatest legal mysteries of our times. After more than two years of investigation, they have found no crime or criminal among the Commission on Elections officials who negotiated, approved and signed the P1.3-billion contract for the supply of vote counting machines, but they may have uncovered another crime and identified the culprits. The crime is what lawyers call "grave abuse of discretion," probably compounded by a host of other offenses. And the criminal is the Supreme Court, no less.

In January 2004, the Court voided the contract between the Comelec and Mega Pacific because of "violations of law and the glaring grave abuse of discretion committed by Comelec." The Court said the Comelec had awarded the contract "not only in clear violation of law and jurisprudence, but also in reckless disregard of its own bidding rules." It said the poll body approved "this billion-peso undertaking with inexplicable haste, without adequately checking and observing mandatory financial, technical and legal requirements." It concluded that "it is clear that Comelec gravely abused its discretion in arbitrarily failing to observe its own rules, policies and guidelines with respect to the bidding process, thereby negating a fair, honest and competitive bidding."

What was clear to the Court is not so clear to the Ombudsman, however. After very reluctantly complying with the Court's order to determine the criminal liability of those involved in the irregular transaction, the anti-graft agency declared two years and eight months later that it had found "no probable cause" against any election official, including the members of the Comelec's bids and awards committee and the commissioners who signed the contract. When critics wondered if this was one crime without a criminal, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez clarified that no crime was committed in the first place. "Did the Supreme Court say there was a crime involving the Mega Pacific contract?" Gutierrez asked at a press conference Monday, and then hastened to answer her own question: "There was none. If there was a crime, the Supreme Court would have ordered the confiscation of the counting machines as they are the proceeds of crime."

Gutierrez was right, of course. The Court didn't order the confiscation of the machines; in fact, it warned the poll officials against touching them. It told the Comelec to "refrain from implementing any other contract or agreement entered into with regard to this project." But it also ordered the Office of the Solicitor General to recover all the money that the Comelec paid to Mega Pacific. If Gutierrez is willing to consider those counting machines as "proceeds of crime" had the Supreme Court ordered their confiscation, can she not accept cash instead?

In exonerating all those who were involved in the voided transaction, Gutierrez and company are actually saying that the Court erred, and erred horribly. They are saying the Court was hallucinating when it formulated its decision on the case or, at least, that the justices didn't know what they were talking about. For if there was no crime, as Gutierrez claims, what was the Court talking about when it found "violations of law" or "clear violation of law and jurisprudence" or "grave abuse of discretion" in connection with the contract? When the Court lambasted the Comelec for "requiring very high standards or unrealistic specifications that cannot be met . . . only to water them down after the bid has been awarded" and said this was "a sure indication of fraud," was this not a declaration that a crime had been committed?

If there was no crime in this case, then the justices who signed the majority opinion of the Court committed a grave injustice when they voided the contract, asked that the money be returned and ordered the investigation of everyone involved. They besmirched the reputation of several honorable men and women, including Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and his *compadres* who sit on the board of Mega Pacific. And since they are also prone to imagining horrible things, like witches of old, they should be burned at the stake.

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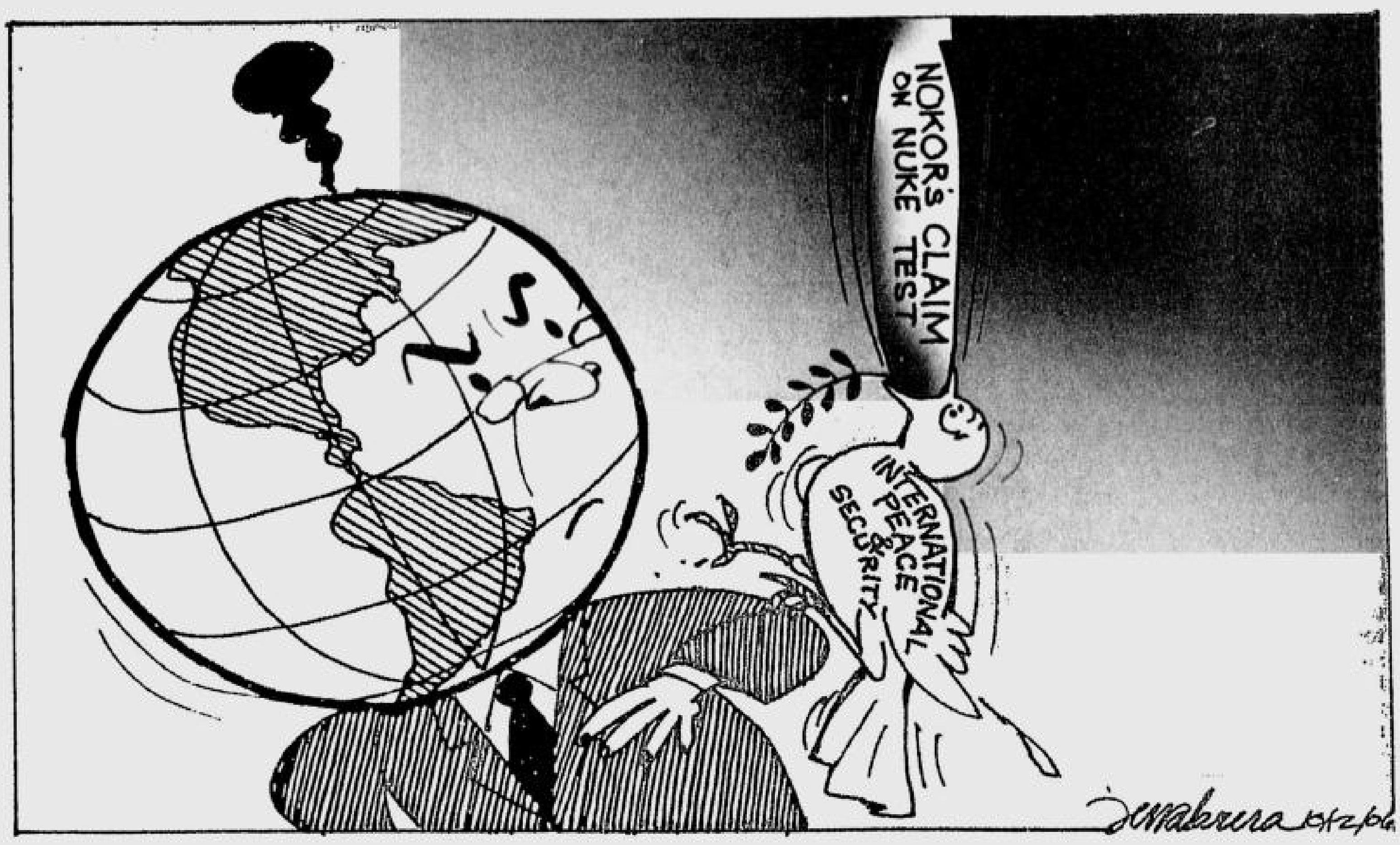


Jemabrera 10-12-06

Hunger as wanderer

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"AN EMPTY STOMACH, " IT'S BEEN SAID, "hears nobody." And World Food Day is marked every Oct. 16 so we can help ensure that reason is not squelched.

From the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization to the Asian Development Bank, there's no shortage of assessments and tallies of unfilled bellies. A "Global Hunger Index" was, in fact, unveiled yesterday by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

British Broadcasting Corporation earlier aired a six-part "Planet Under Pressure" series. In it, environment correspondent Alex Kirby asks: Can we feed a population, still increasing by 75 million yearly, without wrecking the only planet we have?

"More are eating better than ever before," Kirby writes. "Food production kept abreast of global population which doubled to 6 billion people from 1960. Yet, we won't achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger by 2015."

A better-fed world still finds that hunger and malnutrition extinguish one life every five seconds. The daily head count for hunger victims is 25,000. Yearly, that adds up to more than two Singapores.

Globally, 842 million people lack food to eat, FAO says. A third are in sub-Saharan Africa. "In most of Asia, where the 'Green Revolution' boosted food supplies, hunger and under-nutrition continued to decline," IFPRI notes.

"Global Hunger Index" tracks a decline in the number of Filipinos who didn't get enough food to eat over a 22-year period—from 22.4 percent in 1981 to 17.5 percent in 2003. Credit goes to the government and to the civil society and religious groups that worked at food fortification, nutrition programs, increased social spending, etc.

Cheers. But hold the standing ovation, folks. Our performance wedges us only between Benin and Namibia. Asean countries did far better—showing what is possible. Indonesians and Thais whittled down their hungry to 12 percent. And Malaysians did better with 7.5 percent.

Shriveling away from "shrunken" *pan de sals* or lack of micro-nutrients due to poverty rarely makes the headlines. But underfeeding is as deadly as overt starvation, since it invites in other debilitating diseases: TB, anemia, blindness, etc.

Our so-called "food surpluses are a mirage," FAO agricultural economist Ti Teow Choo often stressed. "If the purchasing power of today's poor were to increase even marginally, these surpluses would be bought out overnight by people who needed the food but couldn't afford to buy."

The toll on people who huddle in that twilight zone between deprivation and starvation is extortionate: 30 out of every 100 Filipino infants suffer from Vitamin A and iron shortfalls. They are wizened compared to Chinese or Singaporeans. "Bicol has almost twice as many underweight pre-schoolers as the National Capital Region," notes the UN's country assessment.

Many pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers suffer from anemia and iodine deficiency. This problem spills across generations, the ADB warns. Ill-fed, shrunken mothers give birth to wizened children who, in turn, will become mothers.

Poverty also drives floods of people into cities and abroad. Their need for food and jobs is buttressed by expectations whetted by what they hear and read in the media. "Plenty sits still," the old proverb says, "but hunger is a wanderer."

Politicians do not plow, sow or harvest. Farmers and fishermen do. Yet, they count least in the political arithmetic here. "It is unfair that those who produce the food are often the ones who suffer poverty the most," former Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Hussien Ong once said.

If World Food Day is to rise beyond rhetoric, our leaders must reassess the lower-drawer priority they extend to food producers. And all must keep a few stark facts in mind:

We're running short of arable land. Asphalt is often the last crop in farms taken over by malls and subdivisions. Less visible but lethal are soil erosion and degradation. These whittled down global agricultural productivity by 13 percent in just half a century.

There is continuing unease with biotechnology as the next "Green Revolution." Towns and farms, meanwhile, compete for limited water. Almost 40 percent of crops are raised in irrigated farms which form only 17 percent of croplands. But in many countries, there will be less water available. No water, no harvest.

The proportion of ill-fed people fell—in three decades, from 37 percent to 18 percent, BBC's Kirby notes. But often, "the food is in the wrong place, or unaffordable, or can't be stored long enough. So making sure everyone has enough to eat is more about politics than science."

Indeed, "our development experience shows that a permanent solution to hunger rests basically with the rural poor," the late National Scientist Dioscoro Umali wrote. "It is only when small farmers, landless laborers, artisanal fishermen acquire effective access to the tools (of) production and win a just share of production will development occur. This is not a question of charity but of justice."

Food security comes at a high price, the BBC stressed. It is also at the core of all World Food Day celebrations. An ancient Asian proverb summed it earlier: "Unless you work hard in filling your small chupa measure of rice, it will never grow into a ganta."

* * *

E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Stop the killers

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I HAD JUST TALKED ABOUT THE KILLINGS OF journalists and political activists in a gathering of Filipino press clubs in the United States when I read about the killing of Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento in Tarlac City. My instincts, like those of Ramento's kin and friends, told me the killing was a political one, notwithstanding that the cops were quick to say it was a simple case of robbery. Ramento had been stabbed several times and his room in his San Sebastian parish was missing articles.

My instincts were right. It was far too much coincidence that the bishop, who had figured prominently in anti-government activities such as a citizens' initiative to investigate the cheating in the last elections, would end up the victim of a crude robbery. It happens all the time in detective stories and thrillers with a "twist"—a high-profile murder turning out to have originated from low-profile causes, the sublime springing from the paralytic. But that is so rarely so in real life. In real life, people are killed for the most obvious reasons.

There were many holes in the police's version to begin with. Ramento, though an archbishop of his church, or precisely because of it—archbishops of Catholic churches are another matter entirely—was not a rich man. He had no business being robbed. Moreover, the notion that a notorious gang operating in the area would settle for a DVD player and a ring, whose value lay only in its sentiment, strained credulity. The clincher was that Jovito Palparan's favorite law enforcers, the Tarlac police, could actually catch the perpetrators in record time and even return the stolen goods. That did not just strain credulity, that snapped it like a dry twig.

As it turns out, based on the findings of a private fact-finding team headed by lawyer Rex Fernandez, Ramento was probably killed by a man who relished his assignment. Ramento's wounds bore it out. This crime wasn't done by someone, or some people, who was or were in a hurry to get away. This was done by someone who took his time. "The most evil thing," says Fernandez, "is that he really intended to kill him (Ramento) and was proud of it."

"Evil" is the word. The obscenity of it doesn't just lie in the fact that persons of the cloth have now become fair game for murderers who more than likely carry with them an official mandate. The obscenity lies in the efficient, dispassionate, business-like way in which dissenters are being dispatched. The murder of Pablo Glean, Jejomar Binay's security aide, already upped the ante on the mayhem, bringing it, as it did, right at the heart of the capital. The murder of the head of an entire church, the fifth biggest in the country, the Obispo Maximo of the Aglipayan Church, ups it even further. The graduation or up-scaling is happening methodically, systematically, implacably. And there's little that stands in its path.

It is not hard to see why Ramento's murderers didn't mind including him in today's mounting dead. They probably figured that like the members of Bayan Muna and the countryside journalists, he wouldn't be sorely missed. He was not a priest or, heaven forbid, a bishop, of the Catholic Church. He wasn't Eraño Manalo or Mike Velarde who could command hordes at the snap of a finger. All he had by way of stature were his towering principles. That might have made him bigger than the others in the reckoning of God, but that made him so much smaller than the others in the reckoning of those who were out to do him evil, and did.

But that brings me to something even more evil, or obscene, than the killings themselves, systematic and methodical as they are, inexorably graduating and climbing up the ranks of dissenters as they do. That is the lack of ferocity with which we are greeting them. Of course, as Archbishop Angel Lagdameo says, the CBCP, which he heads, has already condemned the political killings. But it has done so in the most pro forma, if not timid, of terms. Everyone can condemn the killings. Even Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who did so loudly in her Sona speech, notwithstanding that she is doing nothing to stop them. Indeed, notwithstanding that her hands are awash in the blood of the dead, completely subverting, as she did, her condemnation of the killings by holding up Palparan's malefaction as worthy of universal emulation.

In this respect, the Catholic Church is no more and no less than the national media which have also condemned the killings of their own in the provinces but have brought no real pressure to bear on the authorities to catch—not to speak of jailing—the killers. Everyone can condemn the killings of journalists, too, even GMA, who did so repeatedly in her last sortie abroad.

The point is to go beyond mere condemnation, "in the strongest terms," the point is to raise an accusing finger at the true source of those killings, which is government itself. The point is for all the institutions of society—the Church, the media, the legal community, civil society et al.—that still believe that life is heaven's gift, that the life of another person is as precious as one's own, to hale Palparan, Norberto Gonzales and GMA herself into the court of public opinion at least, if not of law—that will come later—and bring them to justice. The point is to put the pulpit, the pages of newspapers and the bandwidths of radio and television, and the weight of judgment of the entire civilized world to bear on the perpetrators, telling them with the stern benignity of a magistrate that no one may get away with murder, least of all to defend an illegitimate rule.

All these institutions have already tolerated lying, cheating and stealing—whining life goes on. Must they tolerate murder, too?

We want to stop the killings, let's stop the killers.

Failure to pass anti-terror law bolsters initiative

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE US EMBASSY, BASED ON "CREDIBLE INformation," has warned of a terrorist plot to bomb some cities in Central Mindanao in the next few days. The Australian government, on the other hand, called on its citizens to exercise a "high degree of caution" in the face of such threats. These warnings only highlight the urgent need for an anti-terrorism law which the Senate has failed to pass, even though the House approved its own version a year and a half ago. Various parties, including other governments, have pressed for this anti-terror law. RP is one of the very few countries in our region that doesn't have such a law. Its absence hampers the work of the police and military.

* * *

Senators have been wrangling over the pending anti-terror bill for some time now. They seem oblivious to the urgency of passing it, despite repeated warnings of possible terror attacks. For instance, they quarrel over the length of time suspected terrorists can be detained without charges, ignoring the fact that Britain, a bulwark of democracy, allows their detention for as long as 28 days. To Charter change advocates, this failure to act on something so urgent is but another argument for the unicameral system.

A Senate is too expensive (P1.6 billion is needed for its upkeep yearly, and this does not include the P200-million pork barrel of each senator) and too cumbersome for our nation to respond to the challenges of the global age. South Korea experimented with a bicameral legislature and returned to the unicameral system after two years, because it found the two-chamber set-up to be too slow in responding to its economic goals. Let us learn from South Korea.

* * *

The frequent gridlocks between the two chambers have hampered economic growth. Crucial bills languish in the Senate (e.g., the Billion Trees Act, the Banking Reform Act and the Department of Housing Act). Moreover, it's evident that some senators are resisting a unicameral set-up only because it would affect their presidential ambitions, the Senate being the traditional launching pad for the presidency. The nation has suffered long enough the paralysis in Congress, not to mention the bickerings between the executive and legislative branches.

Charter change can alleviate our problem, but the sad thing is that the senators have stubbornly refused to even consider a constituent assembly. All they worry about is that Charter change would abolish their positions. (But whoever said they can't run for a unicameral parliament?) The people's initiative, now pending before the Supreme Court, has become the only viable mode to get to achieve that much-needed shift from bicameral to unicameral. The justices should allow the people to exercise their sovereign right to vote in a plebiscite for a legislature that would be more responsive to their needs in our terror-threatened, global age. Yes to initiative.

* * *

Speaker Jose de Venecia and the House hosted a luncheon for Speaker Dalia Itzik of the Knesset, Israel's parliament. The visitor, a literature and history teacher by training, proved most charming. She asked former President Fidel V. Ramos to stand beside her as Parañaque Rep. Ed Zialcita serenaded her with a Frank Sinatra love song. FVR gallantly offered his arm and she took it with a broad smile. Itzik assured her hosts that the Israelis have a very high regard for the many thousands of Filipinos working in her country, and that she would personally look after their welfare.

* * *

The House recognized Itzik's 14 years of service in the Knesset by giving Itzik the Congressional Medal of Achievement. She was elected as the first female speaker only last May. She had begun her political career as deputy mayor of Jerusalem and quickly became a leader of the Labor Party. Appointed minister of communications when the party came to power, she resigned later to join Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert (Israel's incumbent prime minister) in the newly formed Kadima Party.

Before Itzik flew back home, she confirmed to De Venecia reports that she would assume the presidency of Israel within two days. Earlier I had quipped to Avi Balashnikov, the director general of the Knesset, that in our country, women ignore Congress and just go straight for the presidency. Itzik becomes Israel's first female president (the late legendary Golda Meir was its only female prime minister). But she is still young, and she could end up yet as prime minister.

* * *

I have followed the controversy between Sentosa Recruitment Agency, a Filipino agency, and SentosaCare, its foreign principal, on one hand, and the 26 nurses and a physical therapist recruited by the former for work in their facilities in the United States (SentosaCare owns almost 30 long-term care facilities in New York) on the other. Soon after arriving in the US, the medical workers left their hospital jobs and sought to terminate their contract with Sentosa, claiming they were victims of labor malpractice. Sentosa was suspended for two weeks by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration. The firm countered that the workers' move constituted "abandonment" and filed a civil suit against them for breach of contract. The nurses face investigation by the New York State Education Department for professional misconduct.

In the investigation, the agency debunked the nurses' claim, citing that their needs—from plane tickets to board and lodging and hourly payments even before their contracts came into effect to cell phones—were met. It claimed that the nurses were manipulated and incited to take the illegal action by unscrupulous individuals. The lifting of its suspension by the POEA is a plus for Sentosa, which has deployed close to 300 nurses to date. But the action of the nurses will be a stigma against Filipino nurses in the US for some time.

Sikat

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES sets aside the second Sunday of October as Indigenous People's (IP) Sunday and October might as well be IP month.

An NGO that has been working for almost 10 years for the education of IPs is Sikat or Schools of Indigenous Knowledge and Tradition or Silungan ng Katutubong Kaalaman at Tradisyon. The Filipino word "*sikat*" means shine, and when the accent is placed on the second syllable, it means celebrity, a person of note and achievement. Sikat is a non-church, non-profit, non-stock movement that aims to make the IPs find their rightful place, their place of pride, under the sun through education. Not just any education but an education that is attuned to the IP's way of life—their culture, language, livelihood, habitat and everything that defines them. This means developing a "culturally responsive education for indigenous peoples."

Behind Sikat and supporting it every step of the way is the Asian Council for People's Culture (ACPC).

In December 1997, a group of people from various regions and faiths gathered for the first National Trainers' Training in order to share and build visions for a national network of cultural workers and community educators. That meeting gave birth to Sikat and the network of schools.

Al Santos, ACPC executive director and founding member, says: "In establishing community-owned culturally responsive schools, we create linking pathways for the promotion of indigenous education among various tribes across the country."

Community-owned means the people build the schools with their hands, run them, staff them and, most of all, help in making a curriculum that is suited for IP children. This does not mean isolating themselves or setting themselves apart; this means strengthening their children's rootedness so that they do not become alienated from their origins. Then they could face the rest of the world with pride—pride in their ancestry and everything that nurtured them—even sharing indigenous knowledge and wisdom that many of them had been ashamed of or wished to forget.

There are now dozens of Sikat schools all over the country. These are mostly in the primary level. While there are now schools in the tertiary level (not Sikat's) that offer specialized curricula for IPs and those planning to work among IPs, there is no way for an interested IP to get to this level without going through the primary level.

But how could IP communities have primary schools in the highlands if there are no trained teachers? Who is the teacher who will walk through forests primeval and across mountains to get to a remote place on earth? Is it worth it? You bet it is, or must be, for I have met teachers who've done this. But they are few. And for how long could they last?

One of the solutions to the dearth of teachers is to get trainable ones from the communities themselves. They need not be college-degree holders or board passers. Training such teachers is what Sikat has done successfully. Why wait forever for someone with a teacher's diploma to fall from the sky? The children are growing up fast and can't remain ignorant and illiterate forever.

In Sikat schools, the children learn not only the three Rs but also about themselves. The Sikat school is a strong pillar for empowerment. It transmits knowledge crucial to the survival of the tribes. It encourages students to learn their own languages, and it protects their identity and rights as IPs. It sustains community cycles and events. In others words, the Sikat school is woven into the cultural fabric of the IP community.

Making this work is not an easy task. It involves tripartite efforts and the involvement of the IP community, the NGO and the local government. Local government units (LGUs) have been responsive, Santos says, and why not—it is their constituencies that would benefit from this type of innovative education. Needless to say, they also need to put in local funds to make Sikat happen.

Now the problematic part. While Sikat education could well serve the learning needs of the IPs up to a certain point, how do the pupils move on from there if their teachers have not gone through the regular qualifying exams and their schools aren't accredited? Although the teachers have gone through Sikat training modules and are definitely well-equipped to teach, many have not gone beyond elementary or high school. How will their students go to the next level—high school or college—if the Department of Education has not accredited these schools?

This is what is being worked out, Santos points out. The DepEd really needs to address this concern.

There are IP communities that are not so remote, whose children have access to regular schools. Despite their poor and special background, these children have adjusted and made it to the mainstream. But by going mainstream so early, how much of their sense of roots have they lost and exchanged for what is alien?

Sikat does not merely address the problem of education, it is blazing a trail for the IPs to be educated in a rich and meaningful way. I couldn't help thinking: Well, the farther the purer, but then one can't remain isolated in this day and age. Education and integration are the key, but integration with pride and dignity. And preservation, too, of timeless wisdom and knowledge that are as old as the hills.

* * *

Donate old phone books to the women of the Alay Kapwa Christian Community that makes beautiful bags and baskets out of them as a means of livelihood. Please drop them at the home of Maring Feria on 3 Taurus Bel-Air 3, Makati. Tel. 8956234.

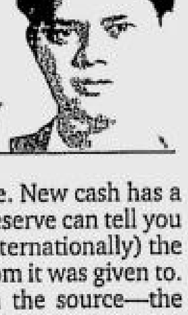
* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

A matter of logistics

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



MY BLOG WWW.QUEZON.PH HAS SOME REmarkable commentators and I'd like to share two comments from one of them. He uses the name "hvrds."

I had posted photos of the documents I saw in the Commission on Elections (http://www.flickr.com/photos/41996503@N00/sets/72157594317595246/detail/) and these were his reactions.

Oct. 9, 2:23 a.m.: "I just realized after going over some of the photos ... that it was truly a major physical process to get these signatures. Part of my work in analyzing business processes or forensic audits of business is joining the dots to come to a validation of the monetary resources expended in the whole enterprise. Labor hours spent with costs plus materials plus the distribution and collection and delivery costs.

"Anybody in the logistics business will attest that you have to have a nationwide infrastructure in place to use. This was no grassroots endeavor. It was too well-organized and laid-out. It is too bad that our forensic audit institutions are nonexistent in the Philippines."

"The utter gall to pass this off as the people's voice is truly amazing. But it shows a deep seated belief system with the power holders that they know and believe that in a weak state you can institutionalize deception and call it democracy. This is truly a superb case study of a massive crime being committed in full view of everyone."

Oct. 10, 11:52 a.m.: "I do not know whether many of you guys were around during the early seventies. I was in Washington during the outbreak of the Watergate crisis. Till today I remember the name of the man that actually caused the downfall of Nixon. Judge John Sirica. He did not believe that the men were ordinary burglars.

"Please remember that everything one does is a physical process. It is a physical division of labor. The ties that bind that physical labor are the alien abstract of labor—money. In accounting, you get the quantity of money spent for a particular period. There are two parts of the audit—quantity and quality.

"Judge Sirica and the police and the FBI found new cash on the burglars and the phone number of an individual in the White House. New cash has a serial number and the Federal Reserve can tell you what bank in what state (even internationally) the cash was delivered to and to whom it was given to. It was traced all the way from the source—the printer (Federal Reserve to a bank in Mexico to individuals who were connected to CREEP—Committee to Reelect the President) in the White House—Jeg Magruder and hence to Attorney General John Mitchell. I could assess anyone's lifestyle by merely studying your credit card purchases, your assets, where you work, what you eat, etc. Everyone leaves a physical trail. Larger groups like Sigaw would leave a trail as wide as a highway. In modern societies follow the money trail .... Remember Al Capone. All international money transactions in dollars or euros or pounds or whatever go through governments. It leaves a physical trail. Trade and finance are all recorded down to the cartons, paper and pencils they used in the PI.

"The Philippines could solve its fiscal deficit overnight if the government were trusted by the people, and the State has the right to know exactly who owns the funds deposited in the banking system. This is part of the institutional framework in advanced economies. You could solve the smuggling problem overnight because everything that is shipped on ships or air are recorded for (bank) cost and insurance (Lloyds). Banks, governments and corporations have access to that information. In major industrialized economies, the government and private corporations have access to that information. With computerization and more powerful computers, algorithms are being formulated every day for every conceivable purpose to create software to sort data.

"The reason is simple—the physical process of doing things always leave a trail (the information of the supply chain). If monies can be traced to have come from a governmental source even to purchase the food to feed the people who signed or to buy the Jollibee or even the jeepney to transport the signatures, then it is proof positive with physical evidence that government funds were used.

"Even the number of hours on government-owned TV that was allocated to advocating this project. Who paid for it? The announcers who are in government payroll who brazenly advocated it. They are state employees.

"Remember what Greenspan said—The guiding mechanism of a free market economy is the Bill of Rights and an impartial judicial system. (Due process)

"Today everyone who surfs using their personal computer is monitored, and a personality profile is created as to ones personality and probable psychology. That is what the fun is about when it comes to the Bill of Rights vs. strong and effective states.

"Many people forget or are unaware that technology is the abstract and the mechanical device (physical) or software electronic digit is the physical manifestation and physical process or tools that make life simpler. The human brain simply follows the physical process to define the realities scientifically.

"Sigaw said that they are a private people's organization. Raul Lambino works for the government advocacy commission. What is his contract with the State? Is he paid daily, or monthly? If so his ass belongs to us collectively. We all pay for his time. The same for that hot Momma Bengzon. Her ass belongs to all of us since she is drawing a paycheck paid for by the State. Her labor is paid for by the State.

"If a person paid by the State is part of an independent private political action committee. That is a big no no.

"How could they blatantly lie in everyone's face."

How, indeed? Because—as the old joke goes—they can.

What else am I when I'm not high?

YOUNG BLOOD

Artel Decosta

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

ON AN EARLY MORNING ROAD TRIP TO BATANGAS, MY bout with drug abuse began. I was 17 then, riding in a packed mini-van with a dangerous company of young friends and friends' friends. I knew from the start that the whole journey wouldn't be innocent as our average age suggested. So when a thin marijuana joint was handed over to me (in much the same manner as food being served on a silver platter), I wasn't at all surprised.

I took a first drag of what would become, from that point forward, a long list of various kinds of illegal substances. I tried to suppress a cough after the first inhalation, conscious of the curious faces staring at me. The group cheered, and I proceeded to contort my face into the nonchalant frown of feigned experience.

As we sped by fields of green, I closed my eyes for a split second and saw the most vivid, most hypnotic red I had ever seen. The next moment, when I opened my eyes, it seemed as if we had outraced the sun and stormed past the sluggish grey clouds. I can remember seeing a nipa hut in Lipa and thinking it was the world's greatest architectural wonder.

The next few years saw me growing to love the pleasant sensation of drugs. Together with those who showed me the gateway into another world of new addictions, I habitually popped party pills, sniffed rocks like a hungry wolf, sought quick jolts of pain to achieve an altered state of mind, and became figuratively hardened to a lifestyle of sinful indulgence. Often, the occasion for such transgressions was a social activity. I realized early on that how strongly you came under the influence of what substance largely depended on how much you were under the influence of whom.

Now when I look at the people with whom I have been, it is not hard to explain the whys and wherefores of our affinity to psychedelia. "M" lives with an alcoholic father who usually beats him bad and even bloody. "C" was orphaned at the age of 7. "D" is an artist who believes brilliance can only be achieved through inspired euphoria. "F" is simply too rich for his own comfort and good.

My reasons for venturing into drugs were not as tragic and sad as those of my friends. I was an average student, previously fairly functional, secure in my family's stable finances, and hardly immature for my age. It was not that steady hits of shabu would give me a personality, but I wondered, "What else am I when I'm not high?"

I would never have gone through the agonizing process of withdrawal if not for the news that came last year. On an otherwise uneventful Sunday evening, a reality-impaired "D" brought a razor-sharp shaving blade into his bedroom. He proceeded to slash his wrists as deeply as he could. A handwritten note by his bedside contained a quote from Anton Chekhov: "A good man's indifference is as good as any religion."

Perhaps "D" thought it poetic that his life as an agnostic artist would lead to such a dark, dramatic end. Perhaps he didn't feel understood (in large part, by his own religious parents) or perhaps he himself didn't understand (for the most part, his own irreligious convictions). But whatever it was he was thinking at the time, what he did confirmed many truths we had all been reluctant to confront. Where we had sought a happy escape, we found an abnormal psychosomatic life. What had been a harmless game became an engagement which indifferently staked precious lives, however dysfunctional. And after we had flown the heights of an altered plateau, we had come down with a bottomless vertigo—and to each by his own sad sedation.

While "D" lost an obscene amount of blood, his suicide attempt fortunately failed. And so did the appropriateness of his suicide note. We had been indifferent, I suppose, and in many dimensions outside religion. We weren't good men and although I realized this from my first taste of drugs, it's only now that I have accepted the fact that bad boys aren't fashionable and that drug abuse isn't justifiable. The crazed, hallucinating, blasphemous fools we were transformed into after every session were creatures outside of ourselves. They were not at all human, for they were devoid of reality, of reason, of emotion, of a sense of consequence, of an eye for natural beauty, and most of all, of life.

It isn't a way of living to be chronically dependent on chemicals and to be seeking the ephemeral pleasure of a drug-created world. On the contrary, it's a way of dying—a stupid, fear-induced choice made by people intent on developing antipathy and hatred for all that life has given them. We were stripped of everything life had to offer because drugs offer nothing precious.

Morbid as it may seem to celebrate the day "D" got curious with a pair of Gillette blades, I now mark it as my epiphany. "D's" blood is our blood, our burden is everybody else's burden, and the burden of everyone can and will always be lifted. I feel as if I am embarking on a new trip now, experiencing a natural high—and drugs be damned. With a body and mind that have been scarred, yet with a soul that has been saved from corrosion, I can now look at the gold, glistening sun and smile to myself. And I am glad it is still there.

Artel Decosta, 22, has a bachelor's degree in philosophy. He has been drug-free since last year and now works as a freelance writer. Reactions to his story can be sent to artel_decosta@yahoo.com.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Scent of evil

"Yesterday, the devil came here. Right here. Right here. And it smells of sulfur still today, this table that I am now standing in front of."

—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, referring to US President George W. Bush in a speech before the United Nations

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Ramento: a towering figure in defense of human rights

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) mourns the death of Bishop Alberto Ramento of the Diocese of Tarlac and the Diocese of Ilocos Norte, and 9th Obispo Maximo of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI). Bishop Ramento was brutally stabbed inside his convent in the morning of Oct. 3, 2006. According to the police, it was a case of robbery with homicide. Before his death, the good bishop was hounded with "chilling" surveillance and death threats which seem to be part of the pattern of killings that has victimized vocal critics of the government.

The NCCP is calling for a thorough and independent investigation into his death. Bishop Ramento was an outspoken human rights advocate. Despite personal risks and costs, he made a prophetic stand on many issues that affected the poor, the suffering and the marginalized. He knew that his consistent voice against systematic state violence would one day cost him dear. He was a towering church figure in the defense of human rights and in declaring God's judgment upon those who trample on the rights of the lowly. Justice must be meted out for Bishop Ramento who unceasingly demanded justice and peace for the struggling poor.

He was a bishop in total solidarity with the people—leading a simple life and marching with them in legitimate protest movements. At one point, he facilitated the release of prisoners of war.

Bishop Ramento was a fine example of a gentle pastor and a fiery prophet. He embodied the ecumenical vision that sought peace and justice in all places and at all times. He embodied the tradition and spirituality of the IFI, which was born out of the struggle of the people for Christian reform and for freedom from colonial bondage. He was the epitome of a true teacher and defender of the Christian faith—a faith that urged him to speak boldly in times of human misery, to testify to the hope that is in Christ and to inspire the people in their struggle for human dignity and the preservation of the integrity of God's creation.

The NCCP has been blessed by the fellowship, good example and inspiration of Bishop Ramento. His tireless defense of freedom and vigilance against any form of degradation all in the name of the God of mercy, righteousness, peace and justice shall be NCCP's cherished cause as well. To the very end, he sought fellowship with his priests and taught them to continue loving and serving the people. May his faith and example be a burning flame to guide God's people in this land in their continuing search for peace and justice.

—THE MOST REV. IGNACIO C. SOLIBA,
Prime Bishop-Episcopal Church in the Philippines,
chair, NCCP;
SHARON ROSE JOY RUIZ-DUREMDES,
general secretary, NCCP

Maynilad's claim may be creating another mirage

JESUS MATUBIS JR., MAYNILAD'S assistant vice president for corporate affairs and media relations, has come up with an official statement assuring that Maynilad is committed to extend its service to 45 percent of Parañaque's households that are not connected to it up to now. In fact, Matubis claimed, Maynilad has earmarked P298 million—out of an allotment of P33 billion for the entire West concession—for Parañaque alone.

This is well and good. Unfortunately, Maynilad's track record does not inspire confidence, and its habit of changing the goal posts every now and then tends to make us see a mirage.

Consider the following:

1. The MWSS laid out water pipes along our subdivisions in 1980, or 26 years ago, at great expense. Up to now, these remain "pipe dreams"—useless.

2. The MWSS Laguna Lake Treated Bulk Water Project was planned for 2001. In her Sona last July, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that 400 million liters of water daily (MLD) will be forthcoming with the construction of a pumping station in Putatan, Muntinlupa. This was supposed to solve the water problem of Maynilad's West concession. She even used, ironically, waterless Barangay BF Homes as the backdrop of her PowerPoint presentation. But the pre-qualification bid for the pumping station has just been completed, with the winning bidder still to be announced on Oct. 12, 2006, according to newspaper reports.

3. The present pumping station in Putatan, Muntinlupa, now serving the water needs of upscale Ayala Alabang Village, was a World Bank-financed project intended to irrigate the rice fields of Muntinlupa and Cavite. The MWSS dragged its feet on this project, such that by the time it was operational, according to reports, the rice fields of the intended beneficiaries had been converted to subdivisions and industrial parks. The government had to sell the moribund pumping station to the Ayalas, reportedly at a loss, to recover part of its investment.

4. The P5 million in water bills owed by Philwater, a company owned by the developer of BF Homes, refers to the unpaid bills of Phase 3 of BF Homes only, and not to the SUBPRES (Subdivisions and Businesses along President's Avenue and Sucat Civic Association Inc.) which is at the forefront of the campaign for equitable distribution of water in Parañaque.

SUBPRES is composed of Tahanan Village, Teoville 1, 2 and 3; Maywood 1 and 2, Jackilouville, Camella Homes and Ireneville. BF Homes Phases 1, 2 and 3; Fourth Estate Subdivision, Mon El, Garcia Heights, South Bay and businesses in Sucat and BF Commercial Center have joined the campaign for interconnection with MWSS/Maynilad. SUBPRES will give MWSS unhampered access to its subdivisions.

—STEPHEN F. SERGIO,
president, SUBPRES,
sfsergio@edsamail.com.ph

No leakage in Iloilo, justice for honest passers

I AM AMONG THOSE WHO passed the nursing licensure examination administered last June. I took the exam in Iloilo, and I can assure everybody that the exam there was not attended by any leakage or glitch. Malacañang should have considered the fundamentals of ethics when it ordered a retake of the exam.

Ethics dictates that for any violation, the person or persons responsible for it (who did it) should be punished; the innocent should be spared. I passed the board exam because I worked hard for it. All I want is justice for all of us who passed without cheating.

Give us our professional licenses. No to retake!

—CHRISTIAN PAUL BATICADOS-BANDAY,
cutiekc_69@yahoo.com

Supreme Court mishandled Sigaw's petition

MAY I SHARE MY THOUGHTS on the Supreme Court's lousy handling of the people's initiative petition.

I find it unthinkable that the honorable members of the high court would be throwing insults to the people's initiative petitioners instead of conducting the hearing on a higher plane and in a most respectable manner.

We were made to believe—as we have believed for God knows how long—that the Supreme Court is made up of the brightest legal minds in the country. Therefore, I find it utterly ludicrous and incredibly exasperating for Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez to ask Solicitor General Eduardo Nachura the question: "Will you entrust the fate of our country, the Filipino people, in the hands of 6.3 million voters who you and I do not know?"

If my memory serves me right, in past elections, it took even less than six million votes to elect a president, a vice president and senators in whose hands we leave the fate of the country. We never had a law that required both candidates and voters to know one another to come up with a decision binding on every Filipino.

And Justice Reynato Puno joined the farce by commenting that the petition meant to shift the country's system of government from bicameral presidential to unicameral parliamentary was written in English which many Filipinos do not understand.

I sincerely hope Justices Gutierrez and Puno were not serious in raising those questions. But then, the petition before them was so delicate a matter to be trifled or trivialized.

We may recall that Puno was among the six justices who said in the 1996 Santiago vs Comelec case that there was already an enabling law on people's initiative. Is his recent comment an indication that he has since shifted his position on the issue?

As far as I'm concerned, if the Supreme Court justices can change their minds on legal issues, the people can also change their minds on the kind of government that they want for this country.

—ARLENE M. SALVATIERRA,
Block 10, Lot 4,
Pacita 2, San Pedro, Laguna

It's a shame not to protect kids

WE USED TO DRIVE AWAY BIRDS with scarecrows. We threw empty tin cans at them when they perched on electric lines. We aimed our slings when they found refuge in trees. But we really didn't mean to hurt them. It was just that they were sometimes a nuisance. And we were just being kids.

But what do we make of barangay officials who are mandated to protect our communities and their inhabitants but who would shoot down an epileptic child just because he felt that he was a nuisance for repeatedly climbing up electrical towers? What do we think of people who just stood by while this child's right to life was under threat? And what exactly do we think of disabled people?

Have we become so intolerant of people who are different from the so-called majority? Are we too quick to judge their behavior and dismiss them as "eyesores" in our communities? Do we now have the supreme authority to decide who should live or die based on physical appearance, intellectual prowess and strength?

In 1985, I met a young girl in a small barrio in Bulacan. She went around her village aimlessly and no one bothered her. She only attracted attention to herself whenever she fell into a fit because this scared people and they did not know how to deal with her. She would go to school but no one took her seriously and was often asked by her teachers not to be around when school supervisors went visiting for fear that she would have her seizures on the school grounds.

Two decades later, I heard she got married and bore children. She now works and tries to earn so she can buy her medicine. She is leading a life much like the rest of us. You may say that she has finally "blended with the community."

What made this possible? More than taking her medication and being allowed to go to school, her family, neighbors and the entire village were taught what epilepsy is all about and how to deal with it. The education of people changed the attitude of apathy and lessened their fear of her. They finally understood her and learned how to relate to her.

There are many persons with epilepsy. They are trying so hard to have a meaningful and productive life. There is probably an epileptic person in your community, your school, your workplace. And you may never know who they are because they want so much "to blend."

There is nothing that will ever justify the brutality of the *kagawad* who robbed Patrick Banda of his life and future. (PDI, 9/25/06) We must be angry and outraged. We cannot remain indifferent to acts of violence, discrimination and abuse of disabled children. We must be ashamed as a community if we cannot protect the life of all our children.

October is Children's Month. Let us also do something to protect the rights of disabled children.

—VERONICA ESTER MENDOZA,
bootsmendoza@yahoo.com

PARP opposes Swiss challenge as mode for selling SSS shares

NEWS REPORTS INDICATE THAT Corazon de la Paz, president of the Social Security System, may have done it again.

She is said to have committed to sell SSS stocks at P92 per and committed its proxy votes to the SM group of Henry Sy—this while the case filed by Sen. Serge Osmeña III and four other senators to prevent the SSS from selling the shares via the Swiss challenge (which favors the SM group), is still pending before the Supreme Court.

I think it preempts the high court's decision and betrays again the interest of the 26 million SSS members—because selling the shares in an open public bidding now, without the Swiss challenge, is still the best and most favorable way of selling the SSS holding. Favorable, that is, to the 26 million SSS members.

If I remember, a while back, the price of EPCIB shares in the stock exchange topped P92, which is indicative of continuing public interest and confidence in the profit-generating capacity of EPCIB. Add to the equation the interest of bigger banks to maintain their position in the industry, the price could go much higher than the price offered by the SM group.

With only 34 percent and needing to have the approval of 67 percent of EPCIB stockholders to forge a merger between BDO and EPCIB (the merger would create the biggest bank, asset-wise, in the Philippines), the bigger banks will want to pay more for the EPCIB stocks of the SSS to prevent the merger, and the SM group will want to pay more to achieve it.

Which is why I condemn the action of De la Paz. God, when will the SSS members be delivered from their supposed protectors?

—AMADO F. CABAERO,
founding chair
and past president,
Philippine Association
of Retired Persons (PARP),
7 Espina Compound,
B. Rodriguez St., Cebu City

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Judicial hubris

THE FOLLOWING LINE IN THE SEPT. 4 COLumn of Fr. Joaquin Bernas caught my attention: "In addition, the original decision had also concluded by saying that 'Congress should not tarry any longer in complying with the constitutional mandate to provide for the implementation of the right of the people under that system.' But Congress has tarried until now; hence, the mess we are in."

I think it doesn't follow that Congress is tarrying simply because it has not enacted any new law to cure the inadequacy of Republic Act 6735. The inaction of Congress may actually be interpreted as its refusal to agree with the ruling of the Supreme Court, and that, accordingly, it expects the Supreme Court to correct its own error.

Congress is not a subordinate branch of the Supreme Court. It is therefore not bound to act simply because the Supreme Court has said that it should act in a particular way. Whatever happened to the principle of separation of powers and the co-equal status of the legislative, judicial and executive branches? In this case, Congress has the right to expect the Supreme Court to correct its own error. The issue surrounding RA 6735 is not its illegality or unconstitutionality, but its inadequacy (which seems to be more of a question of policy rather than of law, and therefore should be outside of the Supreme Court's intervention).

Anyway, I'm not pro-Charter change, but like Father Bernas, I agree that RA 6735 should not have been declared inadequate by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court's statement that Congress is tarrying smacks of judicial hubris.

—ENRICO DURAL,
eric.spycat@gmail.com

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This time, it's . . .

From page A1

and water there. They've been having a difficult time since the typhoon. But they're trying to work with whatever limited resources available to them right now," a Coast Guard source told the INQUIRER yesterday.

A portion of the roof of the aviation group's hangar was torn off by the strong winds and has yet to be repaired, said a Coast Guard officer, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak with the media.

The aviation group occupies the transportation department's hangar at the west side of the General Aviation Area at the Manila Domestic Airport.

The source noted how cumbersome work had become for the aviation group staff because of the brownout.

For one, flight plan forms could not be printed out when there's a scheduled flight.

And so someone from the aviation group has to get a copy of the document from the Flight Operations Briefing Station (FOBS) office at the adjacent Andrews Avenue, go back to the hangar, have it filled out, then bring it back to the FOBS, according to the officer.

"Fortunately, there's no emergency right now that needs the urgent dispatching of the choppers or planes," he said.

Under the situation, doing aircraft maintenance becomes doubly difficult.

Flashlight

Each aircraft has to be inspected after a flight, and if it arrives at night, "the staff has to use a flashlight" to check the chopper or the plane, the officer said.

"Often, the staff ends up putting off the inspection for the next day, when the sun's up, so they can inspect the aircraft better," he said.

But the Coast Guard spokesperson said the lack of electricity was not hampering the operations of the aviation group's aircraft.

Lt. Commander Joseph Coyme said only administrative operations had been stalled by the two-week long power outage.

"Operationally, our aircraft are still flying ... We can still fly any time," Coyme said.

He said there was no reason to be concerned about the aviation group being rendered useless because of the power outage.

Coyme acknowledged that the aviation group's members were bearing the brunt of the power outage. "When it comes to administrative matters, they are having a difficult time," he said.

Because the computers are down, the personnel must write their reports by hand or relay these through text messages, the Coast Guard spokesperson said.

Acacia tree uprooted

The source said that Milenyo's strong winds uprooted an acacia tree that knocked down the wall where the power supply's circuit breaker was mounted.

But it seems unclear who's responsible for restoring the power supply at the hangar.

While the general aviation area is under the jurisdiction of the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa), an agency official said the Coast Guard aviation group's hangar was directly connected to Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) for its power supply.

"Nonetheless, we had it checked," said Octavio Lina, Miaa operations chief.

"Meralco said the power supply's available but the circuit breaker needs to be first reinstalled by the Coast Guard," Lina said.

In fairness, a Meralco team was supposed to check the hangar two days after the typhoon, the source said.

But the team was not allowed by the Airport Police Department (APD) to enter the highly restricted general aviation area.

The reason? There was no coordination letter, the source said.

Another Meralco team went back a week later.

"But still, the hangar remains without electricity," the source said.

Ash from Mt. Bulusan blankets . . .

From page A1

Gonzales, who conducted an ocular inspection, said Barangays Mapaso and Patag had the heaviest ash fall, which was also observed in Barangays Monbon, San Juan, Cogon and Sto. Domingo—all in Irosin.

Residents of Barangay Patag said they were jolted by the loud and sudden explosion, which occurred while they were preparing for early dinner since there is no electricity in the province yet.

The mayor said there was no need for evacuation yet because the ash did not pose a danger to residents.

Lowest alert level

Phivolcs said ash fall also affected the villages of San Roque, San Rafael, San Francisco, Dangkalan and Bulusan proper.

Phivolcs Director Renato Solidum said the villages were blanketed with up to 5 mm (0.2 inch) of ash. No damage has been reported from the sudden ash explosion.

Solidum said there had been no other activity since the ash explosion, and the institute maintained the lowest alert level for the volcano.

"Alert level 1, which we have maintained since July, would mean the volcano can show explosions and that is why people should not venture into the 4-km permanent danger zone," he said.

Tuesday's ash explosion may have been caused when rain water fell onto hot rocks in Bulusan's crater, he said.

"Residents should also be alert against life-threatening volcanic flows, which may develop rapidly from newly deposited ash and loose debris from the upper slopes," Phivolcs said.

It noted the presence of Oroc Resort in Barangay Lagadian just off the 4-km permanent danger zone and within the 5-km radius.

School superintendent Lorna Dino said the suspension of classes had the approval of Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

Abnormal

Phivolcs recorded 10 volcanic earthquakes yesterday and voluminous steam output.

"Following the ash explosion yesterday, the overall activity of Bulusan Volcano remained at an abnormal state," Phivolcs said in its latest bulletin.

The Phivolcs volcanic monitoring division, however, said it did not yet see any reason to raise the alert level.

"Based on the past eruptive behavior of Bulusan, more ash explosions could follow the explosion that occurred on Tuesday," Phivolcs monitoring officer Jaime Sincioco said.

He said the eruptive behavior of Bulusan, which has had 10 ash explosions since March 19, usually continued up to a year.

Ash and steam emissions as well as volcanic quakes do not necessarily mean that there is magma movement, according to Sincioco.

He said the volcanic quakes could be caused by the fracturing of rocks, which are way below the crater.

Bulusan is one of 22 active volcanoes in the Philippines, which lies in the Pacific Ocean's "Ring of Fire," where volcanic activity and earthquakes are common. *With reports from Blanche S. Rivera in Manila, and AP*

Women dress to impress when fertile . . .

From page A1

A study of young college women showed they frequently wore more fashionable or flashier clothing and jewelry when they were ovulating, as assessed by a panel of men and women looking at their photographs.

"They tend to put on skirts instead of pants, show more skin and generally dress more fashionably," said Martie Haselton, a communication studies and psychology expert at the University of California Los Angeles who led the study.

Writing in the journal Hormones and Behavior, Haselton and her colleagues said their findings disproved the conventional wisdom that women are unique among animals in concealing, even from themselves, when they are most fertile.

Some animals release powerful scents when ready to mate, while others display skin color changes.

Human ovulation, however, is notoriously difficult to detect. This is attested to by the frequency of unintended pregnancy, as well as test kits marketed to women wishing to become pregnant but unaware of the likeliest time to conceive.

Haselton's team found that the cues are there, even if men and women are not consciously aware of them.

Women usually ovulate on the 15th day of their menstrual cycles, and this day is when they are the most fertile.

Ovulation is easily detected using urine tests, and Haselton's team used such a test to check fertility in their study.

The researchers asked 30 university students to come to their lab for a test, without letting them know the nature of the experiment.

"We asked them some things about food, for example," Haselton said in a telephone interview.

The women came back several times over the course of a month and were photographed twice—once in their fertile phase and another time in their least fertile phase. The faces in the photographs were blacked out.

Who looks hot?

The research team then told 42 men and women, some older than the volunteers, to assess these photographs by asking: "In what photo is the person trying to look more attractive?"

The judges chose the photograph taken during a woman's fertile phase 60 percent of the time, Haselton said.

"This is well beyond chance. They were pretty consistent," she said.

"One of the things we found pretty interesting is that people sort of have their personal style, almost like their uniform," Haselton added. "The women would show up at the lab wearing something pretty close to what they wore before, but embellished."

For example, one woman wore loose knit leggings and a tank top in both photos.

"In her high fertility photograph, she would be wearing a very pretty tank top and she was wearing more jewelry. The difference was quite subtle," Haselton said.

More fashionably

The fertile women did not necessarily dress more provocatively, Haselton noted. "We did see a little bit more skin. It was my impression that the women were just dressing a little bit more fashionably but not sexier."

Haselton was also interested to note what did not happen.

"There's a popular notion that when women approach menstrual onset, they get out their bloated clothes and they pull out their sweats," she said. "But we didn't find that to be the case."

Haselton's team had earlier reported that women were more likely to flirt and look at attractive men when ovulating. *Reuters*

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Death threats hound Aglipayan priests

By Christian Esguerra

AN AGLIPAYAN PRIEST HELPing supporters of slain Bishop Alberto Ramento dig deeper into his murder has been getting death threats.

The threat comes mainly in the form of text messages being sent to Fr. Gilbert Garcia, who is assigned in the Diocese of Tarlac, according to a statement by the Iglesia Filipina Independiente.

Garcia is the diocese's designated spokesperson on the murder of Ramento who was found dead inside the rectory of the San Sebastian Parish in Tarlac City last Oct. 3.

Early last Monday, a member of the Aglipayan Church noticed three hooded men roaming the vicinity of the church, according to the statement.

The Aglipayan Church, which lost its top leader in Ramento, was convinced that the unidentified men were military agents monitoring the movement of Garcia, himself a human rights advocate like the murdered bishop.

Garcia is also actively supporting the plight of Hacienda Luisita workers in a protracted dispute over land reform and just compensation.

"This shadowing is part of a harassment scheme to intimidate him from doing his part in shedding light on the brutal killing of his bishop," the church said.

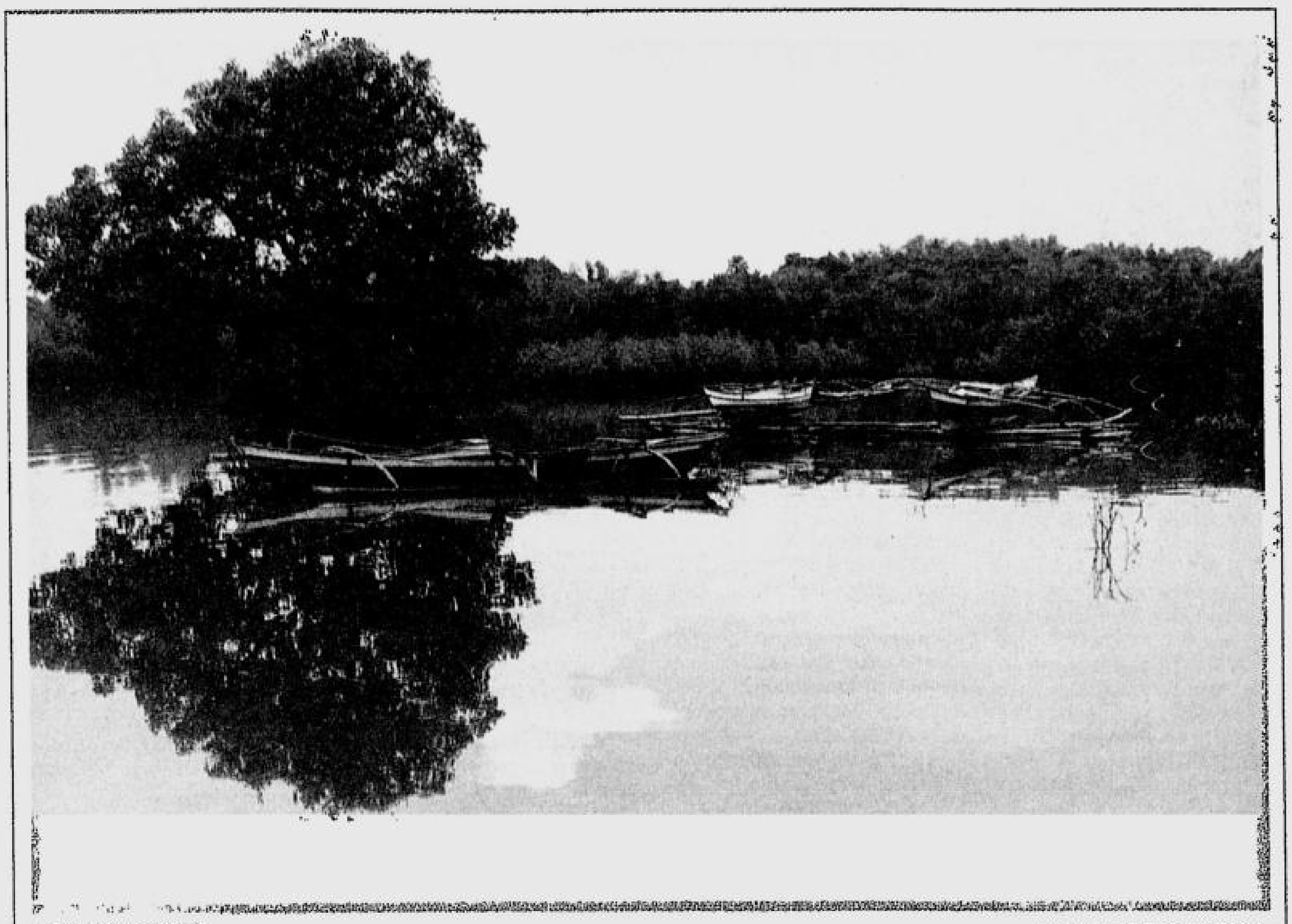
Since the murder of Ramento, members of the Aglipayan Church and their supporters have been quick in sounding the alarm on possible threats.

Last Monday, five Aglipayan priests expressed fear that they were being targeted by the same people purportedly behind the killing of their 70-year-old bishop.

Like many of their peers, the priests believed that the killing was no simple case of robbery as claimed by Tarlac police investigators.

The Promotion of Church People's Response identified the clergymen as Fathers Terry Revollido of Pangasinan, Romeo Tagud of Negros, Marco Sulayao of Panay, Sonny Teleron of Western Mindanao, and Antonio Ablon of Cagayan de Oro.

They were similarly getting death threats through text messages, according to the church-based human rights group. *With a report from Aquiles Zonio, Inquirer Mindanao*



REFLECTIONS ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS
From this angle, the destruction wrought on the environment by the spill of Petron bunker fuel into the waters of Guimaras is barely visible. A closer look, however, would reveal mangroves, shores and marine life tainted with black oil and livelihood that was changed from fishing to cleaning up the mess.

Top NPA leader in C. Luzon captured

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—POLICE YESTERDAY arrested a top leader of the New People's Army operating in Central Luzon, Director General Oscar Calderon, Philippine National Police chief, told the INQUIRER.

Calderon, in a telephone interview, said Leopoldo Caluza, 49, was cornered in a police operation "somewhere in northern Luzon."

Police and military reports said Caluza is the secretary general of the Nueva Ecija Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the chief of the NPA in Central Luzon in the late 1990s.

Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, Central Luzon police director, declined to provide details on the arrest of Caluza.

Rafanan said several police teams from the regional police were conducting pursuit operations for Caluza's companions, reportedly also top leaders of the CPP and NPA in the region.

Lt. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, chief of the military's Northern Luzon Command, also confirmed the arrest but he declined to give details.

Calderon said the police have been holding Caluza for tactical interrogation.

Supt. Oscar Albayalde, Central Luzon police intelligence chief, said the PNP's order of battle showed that Caluza held regional and provincial posts both in the NPA and the CPP.

Caluza, a son of a top NPA commander, has no record of previous arrests.

Military reports said Caluza's group had withdrawn to the northern part of Nueva Ecija through Carranglan town after retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, former chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, deployed more troops in the province in line with the government's all-out campaign against communist guerrillas.

In Nueva Ecija, the mother of a 19-year-old student supposedly abducted and killed by Caluza's group in 2002 welcomed his arrest.

"*Tuwang tuwa kami at nahuli na ang lider ng pumatay sa aking anak* (We are glad that authorities have finally captured my daughter's killer)," said Tarcila Ramos.

Ramos said she will pursue the case against Caluza for the murder of her daughter, Kathlyn, a student of the Central Luzon State University.

Kathlyn's remains were dug out in the upland village of Kaliwanagan in San Jose City last week.

The girl, according to a rebel returnee who accompanied a group of policemen, soldiers and reporters to the site, was ordered killed by NPA leaders in Nueva Ecija after she was suspected to be a military agent as one of her relatives is a soldier.

Ramos said she last saw her daughter alive when she left their house on Oct. 13, 2002. She said Kathlyn did not tell her where she was going or who was she going to meet.

Kathlyn, according to her mother, was "very secretive" about her activities in and out of school.

It was only later that Ramos learned that her daughter joined the League of Filipino Students (LFS), a militant student organization, while she was enrolled at the CLSU at the Science City of Muñoz. *Tonette Orejas with a report from Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon*

US to spend ₱3M for new war games in Zambales

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC Zone—The US military is spending P2.3 million on civil-military operations and another P1 million for donations in community outreach projects during the Talon Vision and Amphibious Landing Exercises (Phiblex), a US Marine spokesperson said.

Capt. Burrell Parmer said the 15-day exercises will officially start on Oct. 16.

Parmer said members of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade and the Philippine Navy began on Monday the operations in Barangay San Juan in San Antonio, Zambales.

The contingent is putting up a multi-purpose building near the town's public cemetery and has started giving free medical and dental services.

Parmer said the US military would also donate school supplies to the San Juan Elementary School.

The CMOs and outreach projects would be done in communities near the sites of the exercises. These are in Zambales, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Palawan, Parmer said.

The war games, which resumed in 1999 after the Senate's approval of the Visiting Forces Agreement, aim to "increase readiness and continue professional relationship" between the armed forces of the two countries.

More than 5,000 US soldiers are participating in the training. An advance team of at least 500 US soldiers arrived last week. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Opposition to 'retake' in Visayas growing

BACOLOD CITY—OPPOSITION to a government move to force a retake of last June's nursing licensure examinations continues to grow in the Visayas.

About 1,000 passers, their parents, teachers and officials of Negros Occidental and Bacolod City gathered at Capitol Lagoon Park on Tuesday, dressed in black, to appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo not to order a retake of the tests, which they said they passed fair and square.

The provincial and city governments expressed support for the Negrense nurses while the provincial and city Sanggunian each passed a resolution asking Ms Arroyo to desist from issuing the retake order.

Retired school teacher Monina Edaño lamented the fact that many parents like her are saddled with debts to send their children through nursing school and take the board only for their children to be unjustly treated for a leak they had nothing to do with.

Earlier, Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra also wrote to the President to appeal to her not to order a retake.

Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, in a telephone interview, denounced the persons who alleged that there was widespread leakage of the tests. He said these were "unsubstantiated claims" made at the expense of 17,000 students who passed.

NO
RETAKE
ANGHA
NG SABL
NO

HUNDREDS of nursing graduates who took and passed the board exams last June join a rally at the Liwasang Bonifacio to protest a government move to force them to retake the exams. REM ZAMORA

"These innuendo peddlers should not be taken seriously because they are subjecting the fate of 17,000 passers to trial by publicity," Puentebella said.

In Cebu City, protesters asked those who came out to say the leakage was nationwide to "show evidence or shut up."

Chulou Penales, a graduate of the South Western University and ranked No. 10 in the tests, headed the 300 board passers and parents who rallied against the retake at the Fuente Osmeña Circle yesterday morning.

Penales is the leader of the group Tanan or Tapoktapok sa Nagkahiusang Nurses Batok sa Retake, which sent manifesto to the President against the retake.

Penales said they are 100 percent sure that there was no leakage in Cebu and in the Visayas.

"That is why we are fighting very courageously because we knew that there was no leakage in Cebu. These people are just trying to poison the minds of the people," Penales said.

The group also asked Labor Secretary Arturo Brion to inhibit from handling the issue.

"It's not okay, we know for a fact that Brion is already biased in favor of the retake. If possible, he should inhibit himself," Penales said, adding that the matter should be left to the Court of Appeals.

A similar rally was held in Legazpi City, with about 200 nursing graduates who passed the recent nursing licensure examination protesting in front of the Professional Regulation Commission-Bicol and the provincial capitol.

Catherine Vargas, president of the "Oragon na mga Bagong Nars kan Albay," said the group was formed through a text brigade organized last week after Ms Arroyo ordered a retake of the exams.

Malacañang announced on Oct. 4 that it would defer the issuance of an executive order for a retake.

Last Monday, the newly-formed group sent a letter to Ms Arroyo asking her to spare Bicol nursing graduates from the retake.

The group gathered more than 400 signatures from all over the region in its campaign last Friday. *Carla Gomez and Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

ROUNDUP

3 sideswiped by jeep die

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Three persons died in a hospital in Isabela City, Basilan where they were brought after they were hit by a jeep while fixing the flat tire of their truck in the city. Insp. Mohammad Surki Serenas, Basilan police intelligence chief, said the jeep driver claimed he did not see the three by the roadside.

Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

NPA leader slain in clash

BALANGA CITY—A platoon leader of the New People's Army operating in Bataan and Zambales was killed in a clash with government soldiers and policemen in Pilar, Bataan on Tuesday. Chief Insp. Luisito Magnaye, chief of the Bataan police's intelligence and investigation division, said Tirso Bumatay, 30, alias Guido, was killed in the hour-long gunfight at the foot of the Mt. Samat Shrine (Dambana ng Kagitingan) in Barangay Diwa, Pilar at 4:30 a.m.

Greg Refraccion, Inquirer Central Luzon

SSS exec shot, wounded

COTABATO CITY—An unidentified man shot and wounded Social Security System Cotabato branch manager Erlinda Rapacon in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao on Monday night. Police said Rapacon was in a van on her way home to Pigcawayan, North Cotabato at around 6 p.m. when a man ordered her to alight in Barangay Pigcalagan in Sultan Kudarat town and shot her in the face. North Cotabato Board Member Celestino Rapacon, the victim's brother-in-law, said the shooting could be "work-related." He declined to elaborate.

Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

Store faces charges

KIDAPAWAN CITY—The city health office and the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) were preparing to file charges against Novo, a store here, if it continued to ignore summons to submit documents that all its food products are BFAD-approved. City Health Officer Dr. Raymundo Prieto said the warning was issued after 31 pupils of the Kidapawan Central Elementary School were found positive of food-poisoning. The children complained of severe abdominal pain, headache and nausea after eating a "spicy chocolate bar" that they allegedly bought from Novo.

Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

Kalibo electoral case

THE KALIBO Regional Trial Court has junked an electoral protest filed against Mayor Raymar Rebaldo after his opponent failed to substantiate charges of massive vote-buying and tampering of election returns. In his 31-page decision, Judge Eustaquio Terencio said lack of evidence was the main reason for dismissing the protest filed by William Lachica whose protest was prompted by the 81-vote margin Rebaldo posted in the 2004 elections. The original tally showed Rebaldo gathering 14,101 against Lachica's 14,020.

Judges' meeting in Clark

CHIEF Justice Artemio V. Panganiban will lead guests at this year's national convention of the Philippine Judges Association (PJA), set on Oct. 12-14 at the Holiday Inn, Clark Field, Pampanga. In a press statement, the PJA said more than 900 judges would attend the convention that would feature lectures on money laundering, piracy and the juvenile justice and welfare system. PJA members who have been promoted or are renowned for their exemplary achievements will also be recognized.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Floreño G. Solmirano**

Surviving 4 decades of attacks on the Left

By Niña Catherine Calleja
Calamba City

FOUR DECADES OF INVOLVEMENT with the Left and an assassination attempt on his life have not deterred this 63-year-old activist from pursuing his crusade.

'The killings are [now more] blatant—most take place in the day, in public places'

Now walking with a cane and unable to raise his fist and hear in his left ear—the effects of the wounds he had suffered—Peter Gonzales has remained one of the main speakers during protest marches.

"Tata Pido," as he is fondly known, has not wavered in his fight that spans four regimes widely criticized for human rights violations.

Gonzales was 23 years old when he joined the Kabataang Makabayan (KM), a militant youth group which was at the forefront of rallies against strongman Ferdinand Marcos in the 1970s. He was then involved in organizing members of fishing communities in Quezon.

When Marcos imposed martial law on Sept. 21, 1972, Gonzales was attending a fiesta celebration in his barangay. Fearing arrest, he sought refuge in a commercial fishing vessel and stayed there for two weeks, without communication from the outside and with little food.

"*Siyempre, natakot ako noon* (Of course, I was scared)," he said.

In his community, four KM members were detained and four other activists, including two peasants, were killed during the early years of military rule.

In 1988, Gonzales left his family because the military was allegedly hunting him down in their village. He moved to Teresa, Rizal, and continued his organizing work.

He returned to Quezon in 1990 after his relatives had told him that it was already safe for him to do so.

Assassination attempt

At the onset of the Arroyo administration, he was elected chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Quezon and the Pagkakaisa ng mga Mamamalakaya-Timog Katagalugan.

He continued to work against the privatization of fishing areas in Quezon and to help farmers in the Bondoc Peninsula in demanding a higher buying price for copra.

Gonzales faced military officials several times in dialogues, especially during missions to investigate reports of human rights violations in the province.

In the 2004 national elections, he was elected chair of the party-list group Anakpawis in Southern Tagalog and ran for board member in the fourth district of Quezon. He suspected that these actions triggered the attempted assassination on him on May 12, 2004.

That day, the elections had just ended and he was in the Anakpawis office in Gumaca town to attend to some matters. He went out to call a computer technician because the office computer was not working.

Along the way, he bought a cigarette at a nearby store and was smoking when he suddenly fell into a canal and heard a series of gun fire. He did not realize that he was the target of two men who were firing at him at close range.

Reported dead

Gonzales suffered nine bullet wounds, including two in the head. He was still conscious when he was brought to the hospital. "Even before my wife arrived, I saw military men in the hospital as if to see how I would die," he said.

He was transferred to the Philippine General Hospital where he recuperated.

His relatives and co-workers had thought that he was already dead because of the number of bullet wounds he had. Even local media reported his death.

The survivor is still a familiar figure in street protests, fighting for the peasants. "I became more determined [to pursue my cause] after what happened," he said.

In September, Gonzales joined a five-day protest march from Calamba City in Laguna to Manila to condemn the series of political killings. (At least 253 activists have been murdered since 2001, when President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power, according to an INQUIRER tally. Human rights organizations report triple the number.)

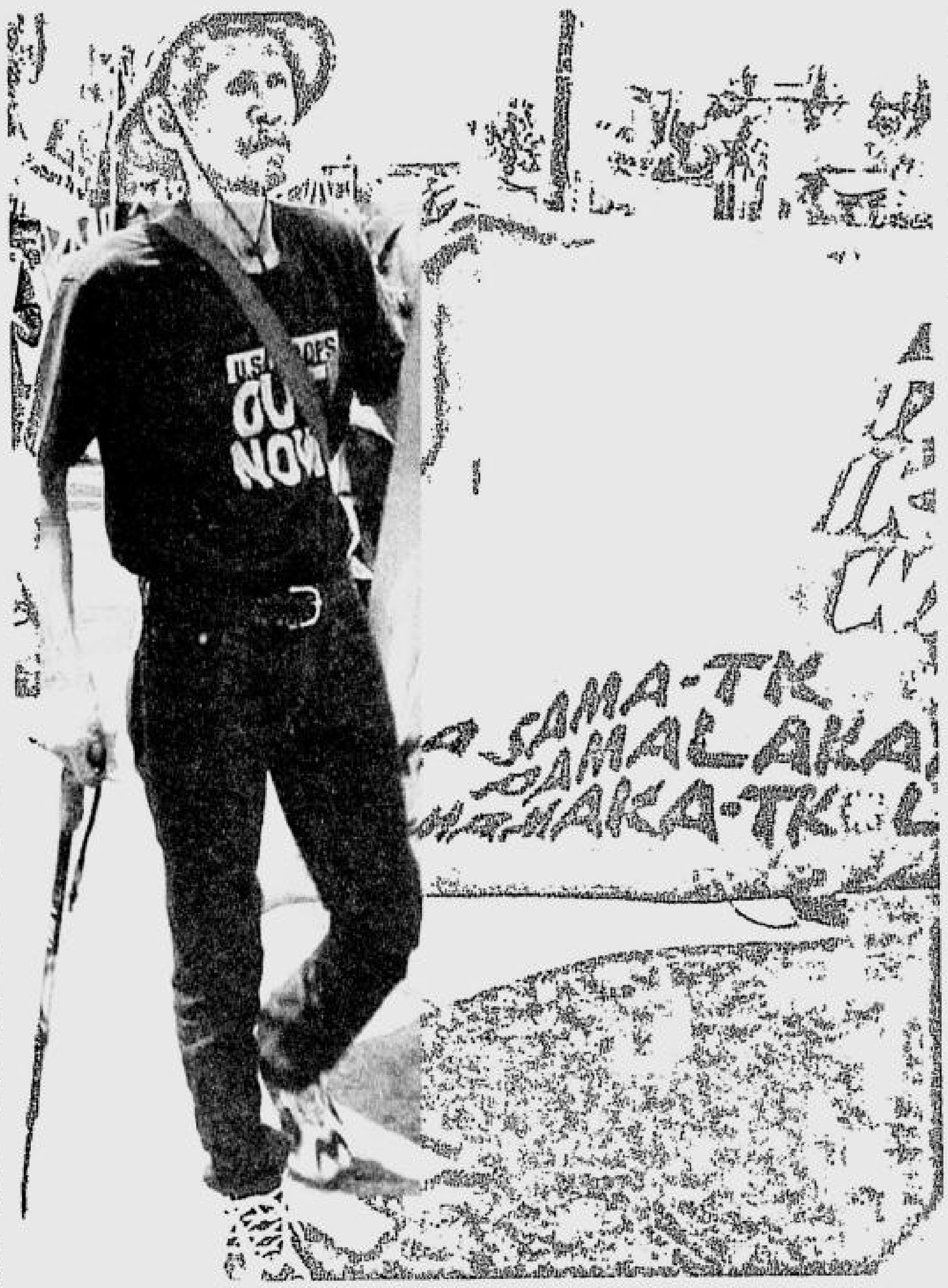
Human rights cases

The attempt on Gonzales' life was among the cases submitted by the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in its complaint of gross human rights violations against the Arroyo administration. The government has repeatedly denied the charges, pointing out that communist rebels were responsible for some of the killings.

Gonzales has claimed that the military was behind the plot against him. Officials of the military's Southern Luzon Command has denied the allegation.

When asked to compare conditions under Marcos' martial law and the Arroyo administration, Gonzales said he saw hardly any difference.

"The only difference is how the killings are done. During martial law, what were massive were disappearances and abductions after which bodies were later found. Under the Arroyo administration, the killings are blatant—most take place in the day, in public places," he said.



PETER "Tata Pido" Gonzales walks with a cane during a march in Southern Tagalog to condemn the series of political killings. NINA CATHERINE CALLEJA

263 tamaraws in the park, and still counting

By Madonna T. Virola
San Jose, Occidental Mindoro

THEY HAD TO BRAVE THE heat to scale the Mounts Iglit-Baco National Park and stay there just so they could record the number of tamaraws still roaming in the mountains of Mindoro Island.

Forty-three people climbed the park in April to participate in the annual count of the tamaraw, the wild land animal known scientifically as *Bubalus mindorensis*.

The tamaraws are globally recognized as a critically endangered species, the reason the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP) of the provincial environment office keeps tab of their number to prevent their extinction.

The national park where the creatures thrive has an area of more than 75,000 hectares of land, with elevations varying from the grasslands to the 2,400-meter summit.

One of the initial components of the National Integrated Protected Areas System in the central part of the island, the park covers the towns of San Jose, Rizal, Calintaan and Sablayan in Occidental Mindoro, and Bansud, Bongabong, Roxas and Mansalay in Oriental Mindoro.

Program coordinator Rodel Boyles said this year's participation was the biggest since the count was launched in 2000.

Counting method

Teams of two to three members fanned out to the 16 study sites in the national park, Boyles explained. The areas of tamaraw concentration are in Loibfo, Magawang, Bayokbok, Bato Fidel, Inubon, Mibluan, Nagbubong, Fangandatan, Anyayos, Upper Lanas, Iyan, Tarzan, Talafo East, Talafo West, Malitwang and Lower Lanas—all in the Occidental Mindoro side of the park.

The teams, accompanied by Mangyan guides who doubled as porters, were told to indicate whether the tamaraw they sighted was an adult male or female, juvenile or subadult or yearling, depending on the shape of their horns and body pigmentation.

Counting was held twice daily during the eating time of the tamaraws from 5:30 a.m. to 7 a.m. and from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m, said Boyles.

Incomparable experience

Equipped with telescopes with a viewing range of 200-500 meters or a close-up view of 10 meters, the watchers were told to observe silence so as not to disturb the animals.

Moving to the next station could take two hours, and the trek for a view of the tamaraws could take three to four hours, but spotting the species was an achievement enough for the teams.

"I can proudly say that I have seen the only animal which could be found only here in Mindoro. It's 976 meters above sea level," said video editor Robert Bahia, who works for the Communication for Evangelization and Development Center of the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan.

"I forget all my problems when I am with the tamaraws," said Danilo Roca, field operations officer of the conservation program. He has been observing the tamaraws for more than 20 years.

Accuracy

At the end of the five-day activity, the teams recorded a total of 263 tamaraws. The number did not deviate much from last year's count of 269, Boyles said.

According to the TCP, since the count began in 2000, the number of tamaraws observed were 154, 187, 153, 261, 232 and 269.

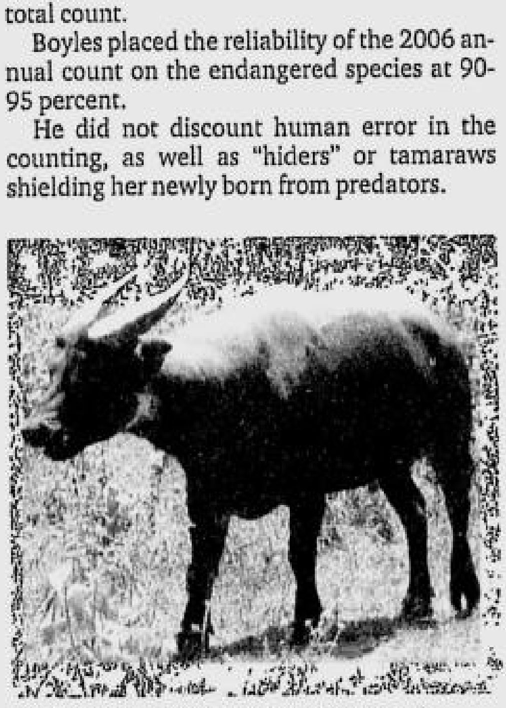
In consolidating the counts of the teams, it was noted that several tamaraws were sighted at the same time and place by two or more teams.

There were also those which had been observed to occupy a certain territory and readily recognizable due to distinguishing features and behavior but were recorded twice or several times.

These instances were considered double or multiple counts, and were deducted from the total count.

Boyles placed the reliability of the 2006 annual count on the endangered species at 90-95 percent.

He did not discount human error in the counting, as well as "hiders" or tamaraws shielding her newly born from predators.



A TAMARAW at the gene pool in Rizal, Occidental Mindoro MADONNA T. VIROLA

'Milenyo' shuts off oldest radio station in S. Tagalog

By Delfin Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

SINCE TYPHOON "MILENYO" battered Quezon province with winds of 130 kilometers per hour on Sept. 28, people of Lucena City have been missing the broadcasts of dzLT, the oldest radio station in Southern Tagalog.

The station's steel transmitter tower in Barangay Ibabang Dupay collapsed at the height of the typhoon and its parts scattered all over the muddy ground. Technicians and broadcast crewmen were then on standby, sipping coffee inside the studio and waiting for Milenyo to subside to resume operations.

Alex Tolentino, host of the early morning program "Balita at Komentaryo," said he was at home when he learned that the tower had been toppled. "I felt pain penetrating my body. We were not expecting it to happen. For the past 46 years, the tower proudly stood tall."

Jose Asensi Jr., the first announcer of dzLT, said it was the second time that the transmitter fell. "I can't remember what year it was, but there was also a typhoon," he said.

Original piece

"But since dzLT has been an institution, past management [officials] immediately conducted emergency repair to bring the station back on air," said Asensi, now a city councilor.

Sally Maldonado, dzLT officer in charge, said broadcast operations might be resumed by the end of the month.

The original Recoh tube-type transmitter equipment, which the station has been using since 1960, still provided quality broadcasts with 5,000 watts in its 1188 radio frequency, technician Bong Eleuterio said.

The radio station first hit the air lanes on March 23, 1960. Then President Carlos Garcia and the First Lady Leonila Garcia, and Sen. Gil Puyat led guests during the opening ceremony.

The maiden broadcast was aired from the fourth floor of the defunct Luzonian College annex building in the city center. The three-story wooden structure still stands on Granja and Cabana streets but remains closed pending total renovation.

In his memoirs, Jose Mendoza, who served as station manager for 30 years until he retired in the early 1990s, said Congress, through Republic Act. No. 2354, granted Luzonian Colleges Inc. a franchise to operate a radio broadcast station for educational, scientific, cultural and commercial purposes.

School radio

"In another aspect, dzLT was also the first school radio station in Southern Tagalog," Asensi explained.

Mendoza said the idea of putting up a radio facility in Quezon was conceived by then Rep. Manuel S. Enverga, founder of the Luzonian Colleges Inc. (now Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation). The lawmaker eventually formed Luzon Broadcasting Corp. for the purpose.

Two years after Enverga, father of incumbent Quezon Gov. Wilfrido Enverga, died in 1981, Luzon Broadcasting Corp. transferred dzLT ownership to Radio Corp. of the Philippines (RCP), owned by tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco.

The radio station is now operated by Pil-Radio Corp., one of the radio networks under RCP.

Mendoza said he proposed the present call letters—"L" for Lucena and "T" for Tayabas, the former name of Quezon province—and the rest is history.

To promote the new radio station, a stage troupe gave free entertainment in different localities in Quezon and neighboring provinces.

Asensi recalled that even before the first pail of concrete was spilled into the base of the transmitter site, he was already being invited by Enverga to join the staff after learning that he had just graduated from a radio broadcasting course in Manila.

Asensi was later joined by Luzonian College professors, which formed the pioneer roster of broadcasters. "I started with P90 monthly pay check," he said.

One of the original talents who later made it big in Manila was the late Joey Lardizabal of "Student Canteen" fame.

Live news coverage

Asensi started live news reporting in 1965 using the company car. "Since the vehicle was colored blue, I named it the blue car patrol. Using citizen-band radio units and telephones, our reporters from the field called in their latest information from local government offices," he said.

Like the rest of the country's mass media, dzLT ceased operations when martial law was declared on Sept. 21, 1972. But it was allowed to resume broadcast on Oct. 20.

The present breed of broadcasters vows adherence to responsible broadcasting "although in a more biting manner."

"Our present style of biting commentaries reflects the kind of situation that we have today," said another broadcaster.

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Kings barely survive Express

By Musong R. Castillo

GAMES TOMORROW (Cuneta Astrodome)
4:35 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs. Welcoat
7:20 p.m.—Red Bull vs. Coca-Cola

BARANGAY GINEBRA STREAKED TO ITS THIRD straight victory last night, but unlike in its two previous conquests, the Kings needed lady luck to smile on them for this one.

The Gin Kings got more than what they bargained for from an Air21 squad that played with a lot of spunk, carving out a 114-113 victory only after an ex-teammate missed the game-tying four-point play that sealed for them the solo PBA Philippine Cup lead.

Aris Dimaunahan, shipped to the Express in the off-season as part of that controversial multiplayer trade that gave the Kings an invincible look on paper, could have forged extension but crumbled at the free throw line in the final 3.8 seconds.

And Ronald Tubid muffed a short followup in the rebound play, which would have authored the first real upset in this tournament that the Kings were tipped to cruise through.

This one, though, may have jolted their senses.

"Well, it gives us something to talk about," said new coach Jong Uichico. "I told them at halftime, even if we were up by 10 points, that this team (Air21) could come back. They have that great capability.

"In a way, winning like this is good for the team, because it can make us grow together."

Air21's loss put to naught a brilliant effort by rookie Arwind Santos, who took over when scoring guard Niño Canaleta was injured in the second half. Santos finished with 24 points and 10 rebounds.

Canaleta fractured the bridge of his nose after a freak collision with teammate Tubid in the second quarter. There were reports that he was undergoing surgery at presstime.

Sta. Lucia, meanwhile, also stayed unscathed after pounding out a 98-95 decision over San Miguel in the curtain-raiser.

The Realtors almost blew several 17-point leads in the third and fourth periods, narrowly escaping with the win after two Dennis Espino free throws in the last six seconds.

Going down for the second straight time, the Beermen gave it one huge push in the endgame after Chris Calaguio and rookie LA Tenerio took turns in dropping bombs from afar which almost pulled it out for San Miguel.

"We thought it was smooth sailing (after leading by 17)," said Realtors coach Alfrancis Chua. "We relaxed in the latter part, but we got the stops when we needed them."

Cesar Catli, an obscure big man in the high-profile Sta. Lucia rotation, scored a career-high 16 points.

The Scores:

First Game

STA. LUCIA 98—Catli 16, Mendoza 16, Williams 12, Cabagnot 10. Espino 10, Duremdes 7, Aquino 7, Gonzales 7, Omolon 6, Isip 4, Bughao 3.

SAN MIGUEL 95—Calaguio 22, Pena 17, Hontiveros 15, Tenorio 14, Espinas 10, Wilson 6, Adriano 4, Racela 4, Gonzales 2, Noble 1, Kong 0.

Quarters: 19-20, 50-40, 84-67, 98-95.

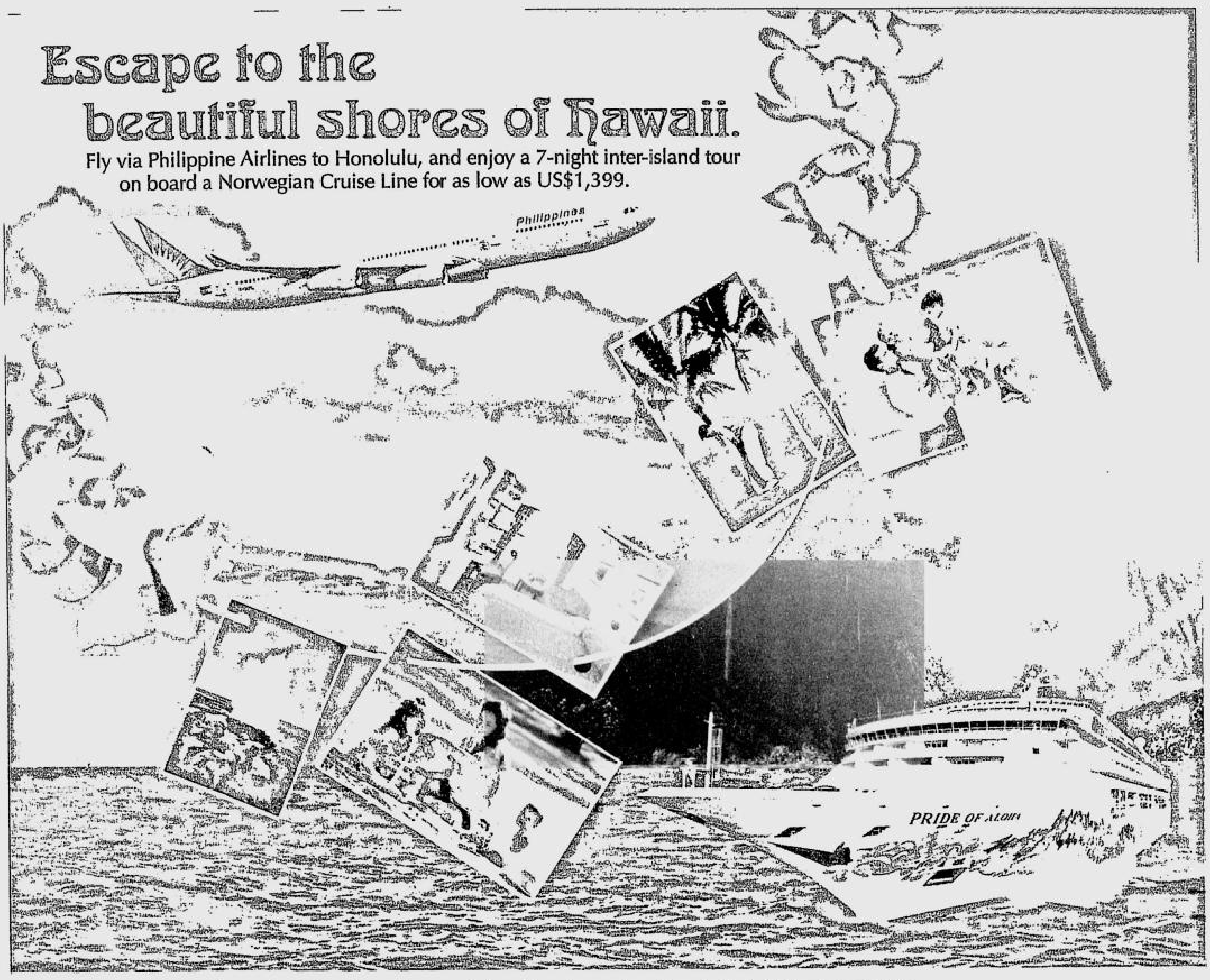
Second Game

GINEBRA 114—Menk 27, Caguioa 24, Helterbrand 19, Hatfield 12, Salvacion 11, Adducul 5, Reavis 5, Mamaril 4, Abarrientos 4, Macapagal 3.

AIR21 113—Santos 24, De Ocampo 19, Telan 12, Dimaunahan 11, Arboleda 11, David 10, De Ocampo, Y. 10, Tubid 8, Canaleta 6, Se 2, Sotto 0.

Quarters: 35-27, 65-52, 92-81, 114-113.

Late Sports
More stories on A21-24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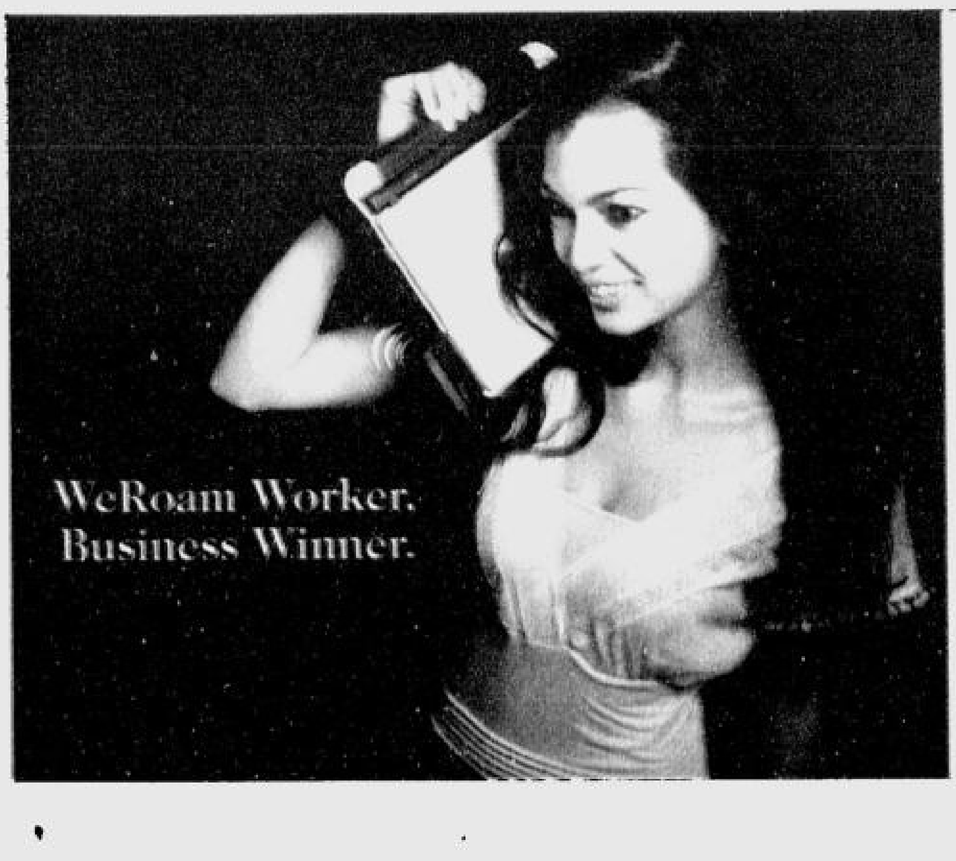
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Majority of billboards have no permits

Gov't ads not exempted from dismantling by DPWH

By Michael Lim Ubac

MOST BILLBOARDS FOUND ON MAJOR thoroughfares in Metro Manila were put up with no permits, only barangay clearances.

At a congressional hearing yesterday, Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. told House members that the majority of 2,161 billboards in the metropolis—with over 1,000 found in Quezon City alone—had been put up without building permits.

"I have ordered the dismantling of billboards that have no permits or those that block the right of way of motorists," said Ebdane, without revealing the exact number of billboards constructed with the consent of barangay officials.

He also appealed to billboard owners to voluntarily tear down their structures, warning that even government agencies that had put up the same "eyesores" were not exempted from his directive.

As part of "Oplan Baklas Billboard," the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) began Monday to tear down hazardous advertising structures on Edsa.

The department first dismantled huge outdoor advertisements put up along the Metro Rail Transit 3 line on Edsa. But Ebdane said they would also demolish roadside structures, politicians' advertisements, electrical posts and transmission lines that encroach on the road right-of-way.

In Makati, the city government has stopped drafting a new ordinance to regulate billboards in the areas.

"Because there was an announcement that a bill on billboards had been certified urgent, we would put on hold our plan to pass regulations to complement the National Building Code because there might be duplications," Mayor Jejomar Binay said.

He was referring to Senate Bill 1714, authored by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, seeking to regulate the billboard industry. President Macapagal-Arroyo has certified the bill as urgent.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, who was also at the hearing, complained that local government officials had been ignoring the rule that they should first seek clearance from the MMDA before construction of billboards in their areas is approved.

He also lamented that efforts to clear national roads and highways of billboards were blocked by court orders. "Our main concern is road safety. But we have cases in the past where the court has ordered a status quo and eventually, a cease and desist order for us to stop the dismantling," Fernando said.

Both Ebdane and Fernando, however, said they favor continuous consultations with billboard industry leaders to come up with doable guidelines on the construction and maintenance of billboards.

House special committee on Metro Manila development chair Rozzano Rufino Biazon, meanwhile, said the confusion on which agency or government office should regulate the billboard industry was more of a "problem in enforcement of laws."

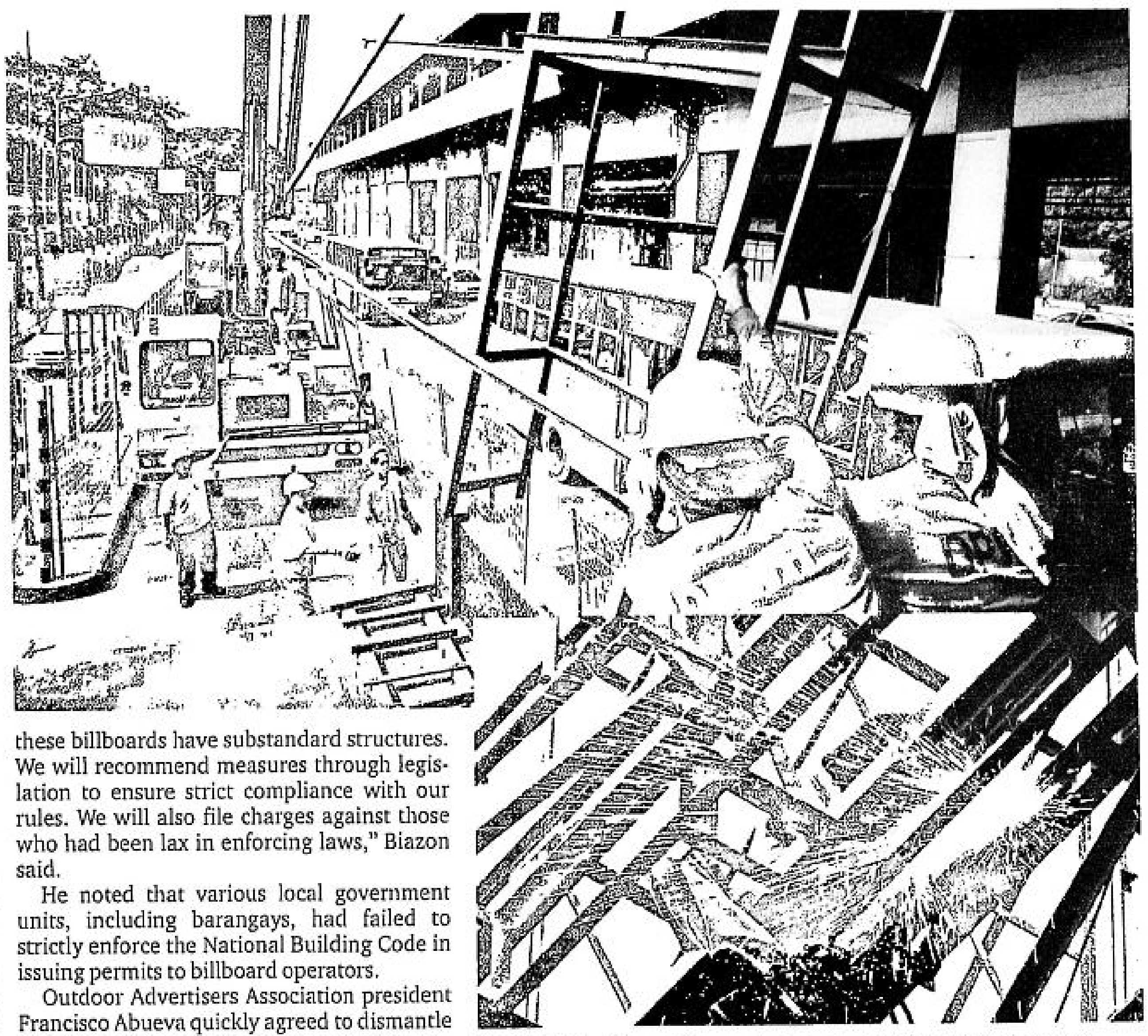
"We have to find out the accountability of local government units as to why many of these billboards have substandard structures. We will recommend measures through legislation to ensure strict compliance with our rules. We will also file charges against those who had been lax in enforcing laws," Biazon said.

He noted that various local government units, including barangays, had failed to strictly enforce the National Building Code in issuing permits to billboard operators.

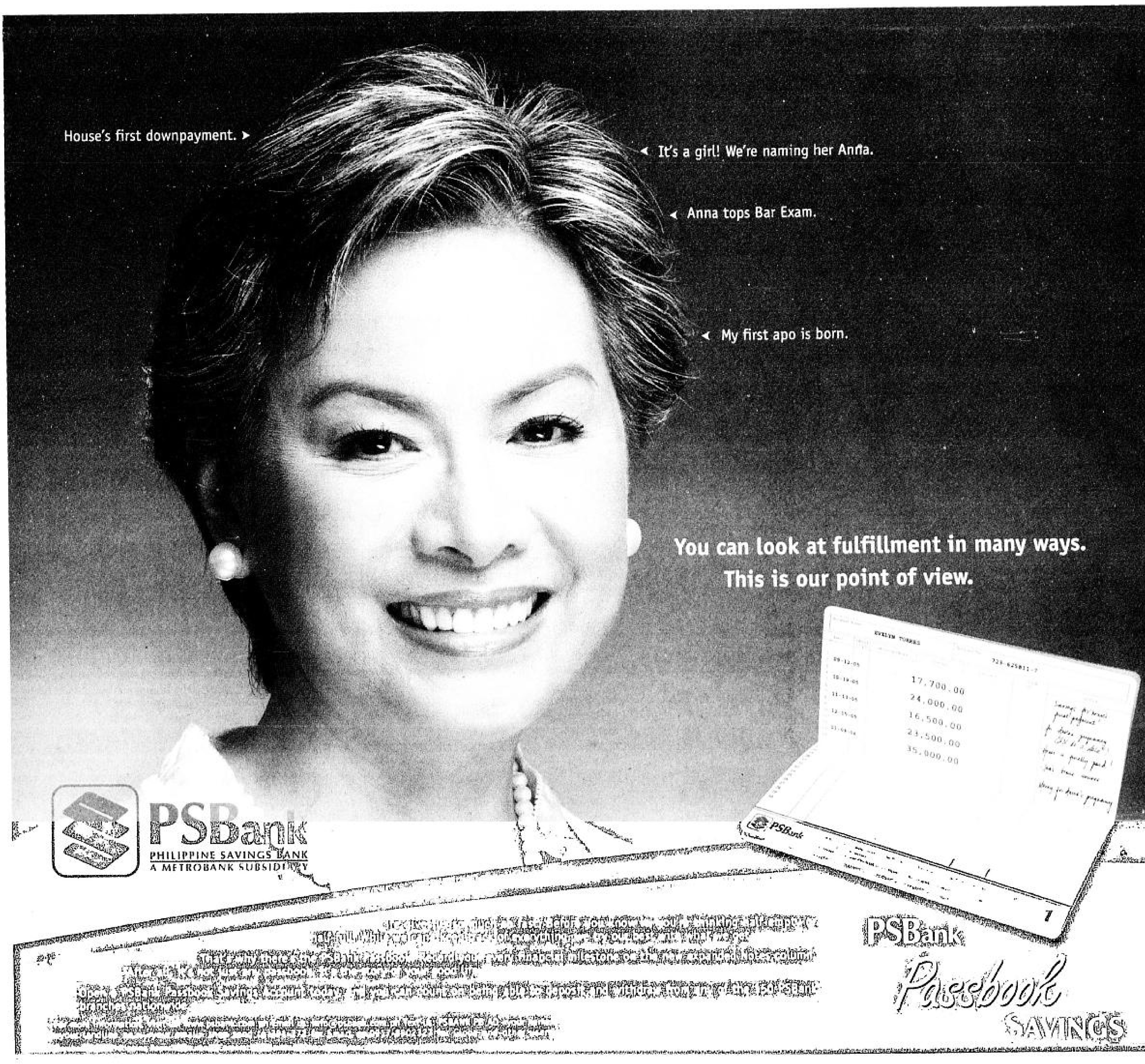
Outdoor Advertisers Association president Francisco Abueva quickly agreed to dismantle billboards that were put up without permits.

Abueva told the committee, cochaired by Pasay City Rep. Consuelo Dy, that his group would never condone the building of illegal structures.

With Tarra V. Quismundo



WORKERS of the public works department take down the steel frame of a billboard which had been put up at the Metro Rail Transit 3 station in Kamuning, Edsa. Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. has vowed to tear down all billboards of the MRT 3 as ordered by President Macapagal-Arroyo. RAFFY LERMA



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Same gun theory draws flak from Binay

By Tarra V. Quismundo

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY yesterday laughed off a police report linking the killing of his security chief, Pablo Glean, to the still unsolved murder of a former rebel leader in 2001.

Binay said he found it impossible to believe that the death of Glean, who was shot dead on Sept. 16, was connected to the case of leftist leader Felimon "Ka Popoy" Lagman, who was killed on the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

The Philippine National Police had said on Tuesday that the Left was most likely behind the killings as only one gun was used in both killings. Police said they based their conclusion on a "cross-matching" of slugs recovered from the crime scene of both incidents.

"Tell them to complete their report. How can you believe that hired killers would only use one gun?" Binay told reporters with a grin. "They are just discarding the political angle altogether," he added.

The mayor had claimed that politics was behind the death of Glean, who was also chief of Makati's Business Permits and Licenses Office.

Binay had repeatedly said that weeks before Glean was killed, the latter had told him that two shadowy groups were engaged in suspicious operations in Makati purportedly to crack down on opposition figures.

Although bent on seeking justice for his friend, the mayor had said he would not participate in the police probe of the case, irked by what he said were far-fetched angles investigators were pursuing.

Instead, Binay said he would conduct his own probe. "In our own way, and with Glean's family, we will not stop until we get to the truth. The truth will prevail," he added.

PAYING IT FORWARD
Lucita Arias, 55, (right) and her companions work on a vacant lot in Baseco Compound, Tondo, Manila. The women must render 600 hours of "sweat equity" in exchange for being beneficiaries of the Habitat for Humanity housing project. JOAN BONDOC

Marikina gears up for ferry system project

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

RESIDENTS OF MARIKINA CITY are already looking forward to a ferry system connecting the Marikina River to the Pasig River.

The City Council has just passed an ordinance exempting the company building the ferry stations from paying locational clearance fees.

The City Parks and Recreation Office also plans to improve the riverside and has proposed an P8-million shoe trail project that would line the riverbank with 17 shoe-shaped stalls.

The construction of the ferry stations, however, has not yet started.

Three ferry stations will be built on Marikina River as part of the planned Pasig River Ferry System, which should have been launched in February according to the original schedule. The implementation of the project, however, has been postponed.

Officials said the design of the ferry stations in Marikina River was being adjusted to meet the waterway's changing water levels, especially during the rainy season.

Stations would have air-conditioned waiting areas, viewing decks, comfort rooms, vending machines, phone booths, elevators and access ways for the disabled, according to the Department of Transportation and Communication.

Fourteen stations would be built on the 27-kilometer stretch of the river.

Three of these will be built in Barangays Sta. Elena, Calumpang and Barangka, according to the city ordinance approving the construction of the ferry stations in Marikina City.

"The ferry system will make travel time for our residents faster and motorists will also save on fuel," City Parks and Recreation chief Ponchie Santos told the INQUIRER.

But Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando said the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission has not yet informed the city government when the construction of the ferry stations in the city would begin.

In the meantime, Santos said the city government was already lining up projects to improve the riverside, especially the area where the ferry stations would also be located.

One of these is the construction of 17 shoe-shaped two-story stalls to house stores or restaurants. The project is expected to begin in April 2006.

Santos said the ferry stations would also help attract tourists to the riverside.

It's back to work for dads

By Jocelyn R. Uy

AFTER A ONE-MONTH "BREAK," the new Pasay City council is ready to return to the session hall anytime this week.

According to city administrator Sonny Quial, acting Mayor Allan Panaligan is just waiting for Malacañang to approve the list of 10 people he has recommended to replace the 10 councilors who were ordered suspended by the Ombudsman.

Those endorsed by Panaligan were Rey Mateo, Johnny Santiago, Grace Santos, Richaela Santos-Hortaleza, Erlinda Hilario, Regie Lim, Art Langomez, lawyer Gene Baliad, Lei Tolentino and Jogi Claudio.

"We expect the oath-taking rites to take place either today or tomorrow at the DILG (Department of the Interior and Local Government)," Quial told the INQUIRER over the phone yesterday.

The weekly sessions were halted after 10 of the city's councilors—Richard Advincula, Lexter Ibay, Jose Antonio Roxas, Ma. Antonia Cuneta, Noel Bayona, Arnel Regino Arceo, Editha Vergel de Dios, Marie Irish Pineda, Generoso Cuneta and Greg Alcera—were slapped a six-month suspension for allegedly entering into anomalous garbage contracts.

Also suspended were Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad and Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto.

The Court of Appeals, however, last week issued a 60-day temporary restraining order which effectively stopped the Ombudsman and DILG from enforcing the suspension order against Calixto.

In granting Calixto's plea for a TRO, the court said it wanted to "preserve" his rights while the case against him was being heard in court.

Days later, he was slapped with a second suspension, this time for 60 days, by the Office of the President for allegedly refusing to provide four city councilors—among them Panaligan and current acting Vice Mayor Arvin Tolentino, with enough office personnel.

METROBRIEFS

Tighter security

POLICE in the northern part of the metropolis have tightened their security following reports of alleged plans by terrorists to stage attacks in Metro Manila. "We have to ensure that no terrorists could enter Metro Manila through the northern part of the city," said Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Northern Police District director. He added that the Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela) area is the gateway to Metro Manila of people coming from the north. "We have strengthened police intelligence to monitor suspected terrorists who could pass through our area," Bataoil said. He added that he has ordered the round-the-clock monitoring of vital installations like the light rail transit system and business establishments which could also be possible targets.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Trash can woes

THREE men ended up in jail for allegedly trying to steal a trash can from a hotel in Pasay City on Monday night. PO3 Reynaldo Aguba identified the suspects as Rolando Tejeno, Rogelio Ansuas and Romulo Cadiao. In a report yesterday, Aguba said Rogelio Ramos, security guard of Westin Philippine Plaza, allegedly saw the suspects at the parking lot, carrying one of the hotel's stainless steel trash can worth P760. Ramos immediately accosted the suspects and brought them to the Pasay police headquarters to report the incident. Theft charges were filed against the three in the city's prosecutor's office the other day.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Free medical help

THE DEPARTMENT of Social Welfare and Development has formalized its alliance with eight government hospitals in Metro Manila to provide for free, or at a discount, medical services to poor patients of the department's centers and institutions. A memorandum of agreement was signed by Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral with heads of Quirino Memorial Medical Center, Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, San Lazaro Hospital, Tondo Medical Center, National Children's Hospital, Pasig City General Hospital, Taguig-Pateros District Hospital and Ospital ng Makati. Among the free or discounted services that can be availed of are professional services, ECG and X-ray, therapy sessions, surgeries, other therapeutic procedures and hospital stay. There are 60 DSWD-run centers and institutions nationwide that provide residential care, protection and rehabilitation to the underprivileged.

Park tree 'rescuers' await mayor's OK

By Tina G. Santos

A PROENVIRONMENT GROUP yesterday asked Manila Mayor Lito Atienza to make up his mind and let them know whether or not he was granting their request to enter the Arroceros Forest Park and rescue trees uprooted by Typhoon "Milenyo."

"We're confused," said Regina Paterno, president of park caretaker Winner Foundation.

She explained that a woman on Atienza's staff, Veralyn Torrecampo, had called her up Tuesday afternoon to inform her that the mayor had approved their request.

"She said the mayor was glad that we're helping him and that he welcomes our efforts," Paterno told the INQUIRER, adding that she immediately relayed the good news to their volunteers, mostly students, upon receiving Torrecampo's call.

Torrecampo also asked her to coordinate with division of city schools superintendent Luisa Quiñones who has an office inside the park.

Atienza had earlier entrusted the management of the park to Quiñones.

Paterno said that when she could not contact Quiñones, she called up Torrecampo who told her to call off their visit and to wait for another week or two.

"Our happiness was short-lived. We're confused. She said they have yet to conduct a study to determine which 'bird-friendly' trees can be replanted in the damaged areas of the park," Paterno told the INQUIRER.

"She added that it may be dangerous for us to enter the park at this time," she said.

Paterno lamented that if they wait for a few more weeks, all the trees that had been damaged may already be dead by that time.

The Winner Foundation president had earlier asked the Manila mayor to let them visit the park to check on the trees' condition after Milenyo hit Metro Manila on Sept. 28.

She complained that they had been continuously denied access to the park by security guards reportedly upon the orders of Atienza and Quiñones.

"The security officers claimed they have specific orders not to allow members of our group and the media to enter the park," Paterno said.

SEEING DOUBLE
The smiles of twins Catherine and Daisy Lumbang are as sweet as the "lanzones" they sell at Monumento in Caloocan City. JOAN BONDOC

DID YOU KNOW

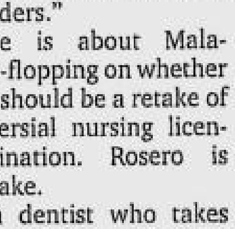
THE NATIONAL Center for Mental Health (NCMH) was known as the Insular Psychopathic Hospital when it opened on Dec. 17, 1928 in Mandaluyong City. It was renamed National Mental Hospital before the Office of the President finally gave the center its current name in 1986. According to its website, the NCMH has an authorized bed capacity of 4,200. It occupies almost half of the 107-hectare Welfareville compound in Mandaluyong, which also houses the office of the Commission on Population and the Correctional Institute for Women. In the 1990s, the government planned to sell the lot occupied by the center to raise funds for the cash-strapped social welfare department. The bidding process for the sale failed, however, because potential bidders found the minimum bidding price set by government expensive. Three years ago, the Department of Social Welfare and Development announced its plan to sell the Welfareville compound. But protests from NCMH workers led Malacañang to postpone the public bidding for the 71-ha property on which NCMH and the women's correctional are located.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

Her schoolmates must be bowing their heads in shame

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



TSK, TSK, TSK. IT SEEMS THE Arroyo administration can't put its act together. The President's men and women are throwing mud at one another, and sometimes the Chief Executive is hit in the crossfire.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita recently scolded Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor in public about the latter opening his mouth too soon about who were on the administration ticket for next year's senatorial election.

Ermita and Defense Secretary Avelino "Nonong" Cruz are at loggerheads, the main reason the President transferred Cruz to the defense department based in Camp Aguinaldo.

In a luncheon meeting I had with the President last year, Ms Arroyo said it was better for Nonong to be far from Malacañang. I didn't ask why, but a Palace insider told me later Ermita and Cruz didn't see eye to eye on important issues.

Mike Defensor and retired Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus, who was chair of the Natural Resource Development Corp. (NRDC), fought bitterly over a government project to clean up the air.

The project involved refurbishing or replacing all the old diesel engines of jeepneys and passenger buses with new ones. Defensor recommended that the NRDC issue a guarantee of $200 million for a company that had only a paid-in capital of P2 million. Corpus opposed Defensor's recommendation and offered to resign, which the President immediately accepted.

And now, it's Professional Regulations Commission Chair Leonor Tripon-Rosero vs Labor Secretary Arturo Brion and Commission on Filipinos Overseas Chair Dante Ang, whom Rosero called "intruders."

The issue is about Malacanang's flip-flopping on whether or not there should be a retake of the controversial nursing licensure examination. Rosero is against a retake.

Rosero, a dentist who takes care of Ms Arroyo's dental problems, took a potshot at her boss for transferring the PRC under the labor department during a Senate budget hearing. She called the transfer "improper."

The infighting shows that the President cannot control her people. If she can't hold them by the leash, then she's not in control of the country's problems.

She's no better than former President Corazon Aquino who also could not control her people. No wonder, both have had coups attempts during their watch.

* * *

For a graduate of the Ateneo Law School, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez thinks like a child in kindergarten school.

"Did the Supreme Court say there was a crime involving the Mega Pacific contract? There was none. If there was a crime, the Supreme Court would have ordered the confiscation of the counting machines as they are the proceeds of a crime," Gutierrez said of her decision exonerating Commission on Elections officials in the P1.3-billion automation deal.

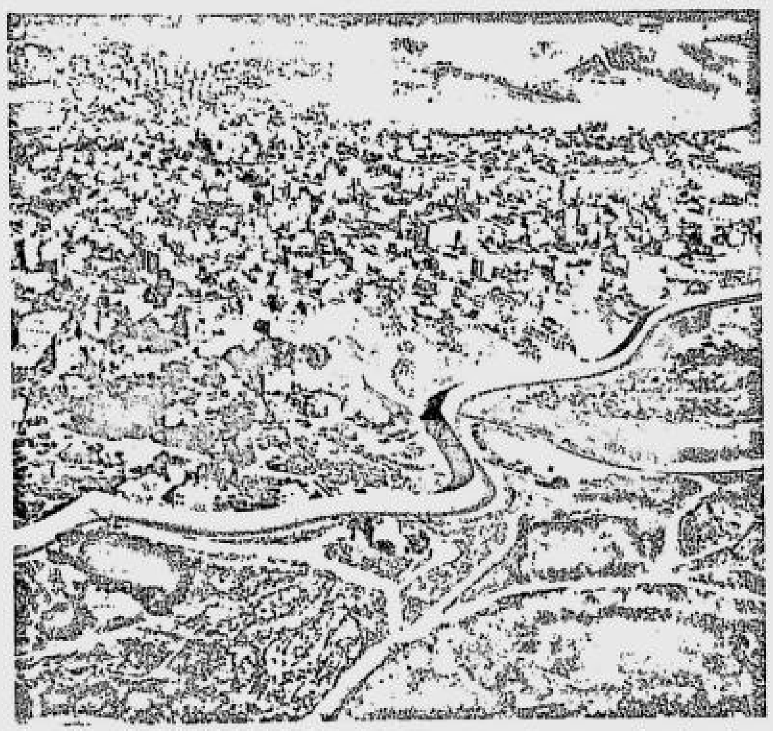
Isn't it clear to Gutierrez what the high court said of the deal? It said that the awarding of the contract violated the law and the Comelec's own bidding rules. The high tribunal also said Mega Pacific's counting machines were vulnerable to "election fraud on a massive scale by means of a few strokes."

By gad, even a Grade I pupil would have understood the meaning of the Supreme Court ruling!

When the high court said the contract "violated the law" *anong ibig sabihin niyan, Madame Ombudsman? Di ba* violation of the law is a crime?

No wonder, Sen. Joker Arroyo refers to Gutierrez, who was reportedly recommended to her post by the First Gentleman, as the "Ombudsgirl."

Her law schoolmates, except one, must be bowing their heads in shame.



GREAT DIVIDE. An aerial view of a part of Israel's separation barrier is seen on the outskirts of Jerusalem, Tuesday Oct. 10. Israel says the barrier is necessary for its security while Palestinians say it is a land grab. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Mass grave yields 160 victims

SARAJEVO—Bosnian forensic teams have completed exhumation of a mass grave containing the remains of some 160 Muslims killed in the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, an official said Wednesday. "We have unearthed 96 complete and 64 dismembered skeletons" from the grave in Snagovo near the eastern town of Zvornik, a member of the forensic team, Murat Hurtic, told AFP. The grave contained the remains of some of the July 1995 Srebrenica massacre victims, he said. Forensic experts have found "many cases from bullets and almost every victim had a blindfold," Hurtic said. Bosnian Serbs overran the UN-protected Muslim enclave of Srebrenica near the end of Bosnia's 1992-1995 war. After capturing the eastern town they summarily killed some 8,000 Muslim males in a few days. *AFP*

60 oil workers abducted in Nigeria

LAGOS—Armed youths in Nigeria's restive Niger Delta seized a flow station run by oil company Shell and took 60 workers hostage on Tuesday, causing a production loss of some 12,000 barrels of oil per day, the company said. "After firing some warning shots, the attackers took hold of the security post, where they are holding some 60 SPDC (Shell Petroleum Development Company) and contractor staff," the Anglo-Dutch oil firm said in a statement sent to AFP. Shell blamed armed youths from the Oporoma community in Bayelsa State, at the mouth of the delta, for the attack on its field logistics base and the adjoining Nun river flow station. It said the flow station had been closed down as a result of the incident. *AFP*

Saddam thrown out during trial

BAGHDAD—Saddam Hussein and his six co-defendants were thrown out of court Tuesday in a raucous session during which Kurdish women testified that women were raped and children died in detention during a crackdown against the Kurds. The fracas began when the ex-president rose, pointed his finger at the five judges and shouted a verse from Islam's holy book, the Quran: "Fight them and God will punish them." Chief judge Mohammed Oreibi al-Khalifa cut off the microphone and pointed to the bailiffs to escort Saddam from the courtroom. Another defendant, former Republican Guard chief Hussein Rashid Mohammed, stood up and shouted insults at the prosecutors. When a bailiff forced him back into his chair, the defendant punched him. *AP*

Denmark warns of new Muslim uproar

COPENHAGEN—Denmark said on Tuesday a new cartoon crisis with the Muslim world could erupt after Danish television stations broadcast footage last week deemed insulting to the Prophet Mohammad. In Tehran, dozens of Iranian protesters pelted the Danish embassy with stones and petrol bombs, witnesses said. Riot police guarded the embassy. Muslims were angered when Danish television stations aired footage on Friday of members of the youth wing of the anti-immigrant Danish People's Party (DPP) drawing cartoons in August mocking the Prophet. Iran condemned the broadcast. In September last year the Danish daily Jyllands-Posten published cartoons that Muslim clerics denounced as blasphemous, sparking protests early this year in which more than 50 people were killed in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. *Reuters*

Republicans scramble to contain damage

WASHINGTON—A FORMER AIDE to the Republican congressman who resigned over a sex scandal plans to testify to a Congressional ethics committee on Thursday that Republican leaders knew about the problem at least three years ago, testimony that could further damage Republican prospects in the Nov. 7 elections.

Opinion polls show the scandal has already harmed President George W. Bush's party, which controls both the House and the Senate, and has boosted the opposition Democrats' chances of taking control of the 435-seat House from the Republicans.

Dennis Hastert, who as speaker of the House is the top Republican in Congress, sought Tuesday to contain damage from the scandal, saying he would dismiss anyone on his staff found to have covered up concerns about former Congressman Mark Foley's behavior.

Foley's former chief of staff, Kirk Fordham, says he warned the House speaker's staff three years ago of inappropriate Foley conduct toward male pages, teenagers appointed to run errands for lawmakers while Congress is in session.

In testimony before the House ethics committee on Thursday, Fordham will insist that he warned Hastert's chief of staff about the conduct in 2003 or possibly a year earlier, Fordham lawyer Timothy Heaphy said.

Fordham is a key figure, not only because he's a former top aide to Foley, but also because his public statements have been at odds with those of Hastert chief of staff, Scott Palmer. Palmer denied Fordham's assertions that he warned Palmer about Foley at least three years ago. *AP*

Iran vows to press on with nuclear program

TEHRAN—SUPREME LEADER AYatollah Ali Khamenei vowed Tuesday that Iran would press ahead with its nuclear program and not back down in the face of international pressure to suspend uranium enrichment.

Khamenei's comments were his first public intervention on the nuclear issue since world powers decided last week to discuss imposing sanctions against Tehran and since North Korea claimed its first nuclear test on Monday.

"Our policy is clear progress proposing transparent logic and insisting on the nation's rights without backing down," a news anchor on state television quoted Khamenei as telling a meeting with top officials.

He said Iran had been right to temporarily suspend uranium enrichment as part of a previous agreement with European countries even though it has now resumed the sensitive nuclear work.

In November 2004 Iran agreed to suspend enrichment during talks with Britain, France and Germany but resumed it shortly after the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president in June 2005.

"If we had not experienced that (a suspension) we might have blamed ourselves and said 'why did we not try that'?" Khamenei went on.

"But now with steady heart and full confidence we press ahead and nobody can give a good reason that the nuclear path is wrong for the country." His comments indicate Iran has little intention of giving in to Western demands for a new suspension of enrichment, a key condition for full negotiations on its nuclear program and staving off sanctions.

Khamenei also defended the government's record after just over one year in power following criticism of its handling of inflation, which has seen meat and chicken prices soar over the past weeks.

"Everybody should respect the president and if anybody has something to say about the government they should let them know but not make propaganda that the government is incompetent.

"The amount of work the government has done is admirable and they are doing a good job," he added.

The Islamic republic has repeatedly insisted its own nuclear program is solely for peaceful energy needs, vehemently rejecting Western allegations that it is seeking atomic weapons.

The nuclear standoff has come to a head in recent weeks, with the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany preparing to discuss sanctions on Iran over its failure to suspend enrichment. *AFP*

Kiran Desai wins Man Booker Prize

DESAI AFP

LONDON—KIRAN DESAI WON the Man Booker Prize on Tuesday for "The Inheritance of Loss," her book about the difficulties of life in post-colonial India and as an illegal immigrant, the prize committee announced.

The 35-year-old Desai beat five other authors, including favorite Sarah Waters and her book "The Night Watch," for the £50,000 ($92,700) award.

She becomes the youngest ever woman to win the prize, doing one better than her mother, Anita Desai, who was nominated for the award three times, most recently in 1999, but failed to win.

Kiran Desai's book was hailed by the judges as "a magnificent novel of humane breadth and wisdom, comic tenderness and powerful political acuteness."

Accepting her award, she praised her mother, to whom she said she owes "a debt so profound and so great that this book feels as much hers as it does mine." "It was written in her company and in her witness and in her kindness."

"I really owe her this book so enormously, there isn't enough to convey it." "The Inheritance of Loss," Kiran Desai's second novel, tells parallel stories based in post-colonial India and the United States.

A Cambridge-educated Indian judge is living out a reclusive retirement in the foothills of the Himalayas, until his orphaned teenage granddaughter comes to stay with him, and his existence eventually comes under threat from Nepalese insurgents. *AFP*

Speculations abound over Nobel Literature

STOCKHOLM—IT'S A GUESSING game every year and this year is no different—the announcement on Thursday of the 2006 Nobel Literature Prize has Stockholm's literary circles abuzz, with Philip Roth, Amos Oz, and Adonis tipped as possible favorites.

In line with tradition, the Swedish Academy which awards the prestigious prize is keeping mum.

"It would appear that we are watertight now. In the past the Academy leaked like a sieve," its permanent secretary Horace Engdahl said.

No list of candidates ever leaves the Academy's walls, and its members, who are sworn to secrecy, are urged to use codenames when discussing potential Nobel laureates in cafés or restaurants.

Last year, Academy members thus spoke of Harry Potter when they wanted to refer to Harold Pinter, the British playwright who took the honors.

But everyone who is anyone in Stockholm's literary scene has a list of names of possible winners.

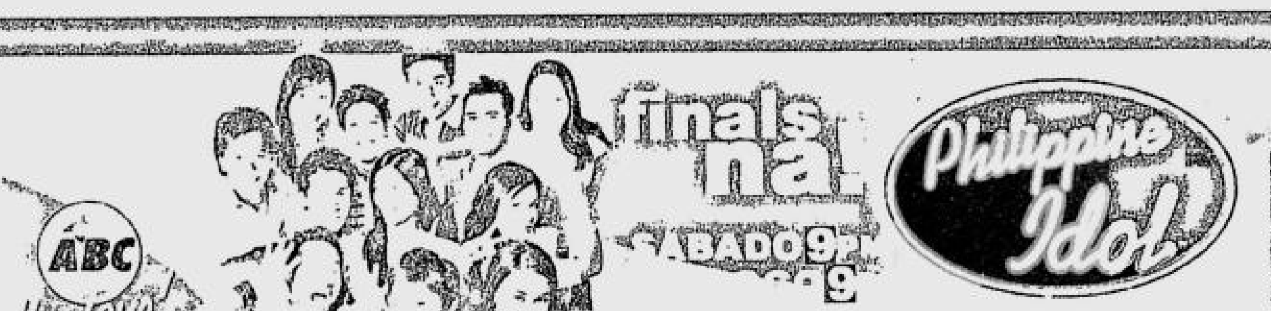
"The only thing that has been very clear, explicitly, is that witness literature is well-placed," Jonas Axelsson, an editor at Bonnier, one of Sweden's biggest publishing houses, told AFP.

"We have often thought that writers coming from war zones could be honored," he said, adding that in such case, Israeli author "Amos Oz would be very appropriate." Engdahl is known to be fond of "literature that has witnessed reality," having organized a symposium on the subject in 2001 to mark the centenary of the first Nobel prizes.

And the 2002 and 2003 literature prizes went to writers in that genre, Hungary's Imre Kertesz and J.M. Coetzee of South Africa.

For Jonas Axelsson, other possible winners are Czech author Milan Kundera and Philip Roth of the United States, who has been rumored to be in the running for years. *AFP*

INQUIRER
TV GUIDE



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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				Mon Cole Knight	Legend Of Shaolin Kung Fu	TNA Wrestling		Big News	S.O.S		Hayop Sa Hayop		Philippine Idol	Sanro	Shorts		Lety La Mas Fea back-to-back with Dodie Cara(rerun)	
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema		My Girl	Pasion de Amor	Yakitate! Japan	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo	Maging Sino Ka Man	Crazy For You		Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	SOCO	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		CSI: Miami (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Samsung Sports World	Beastmaster (Season I)		Maximum Exposure (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season VI)		Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle				Lost (Season II)	
bTV					Sounds of the Finals	NBA Inside Stuff	NBA Jam	NBA Europe Live 2006 3rd Place Game					NBA Europe Live 2006 Finals					NBA Live	Sounds of the Finals
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Max Steel/ My Gym Partner's A Monkey	Robotboy	Mirumo De Pon	Pokemon: The Johto Journey	The Justisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King
Cinemax	The Great Impostor				When The Dark Man Calls			Waterworld (5:10 PM)				Cujo			The Last Samurai				
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	Inside The Middle East/CNN Biz Traveller/ Global Office/ Global Challenge	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Law Firm		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Psychic Detectives	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Bones		Treasure Hunters		E-Ring	
Discovery Channel		Psychic Witness		Kings Of Construction		Raw Nature		Deadliest Catch		Engineering Series		Building The Ultimate	Connect	Mythbusters		Innovation On The Fast Track		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible]	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Monster Allergy	Shuriken School	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Cheerleading		Extreme Programming Sports Max 2006/07		Table Tennis '05 Killerspin	Motorsport Asia	MLB C'ship Series Game1							MLB C'ship Series Game2				
ETC		American Dreams		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Will & Grace	Friends	Simple Life 4	Rated Oh Special	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (DeGeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Nanny 911		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Cenacle Of Divine Mercy	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Virtue Storybook	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	The Catholic Church Through The Ages	Special Programming		EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr. Mitch Pacwa		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Seven Sacraments	Images of Mary	Behold the Man, Spiritually for Men	The Journey Home Encore	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawan Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Panbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Atlantika		Bakekang (8:50 PM)	Love Story In Harvard	Magpakailanman			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Just Cause		Spooks		Wire In The Blood		Regenesis	
HBO			The Sea Wolves				Dark Avenger			Hellboy				Bewitched			The Forgotten (10:40PM)		
Hero TV	Angelic Layer	Sunny Pig	Last Exile	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar, A Little Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Gunlock	Full Metal Panic Fumoffu	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Last Exile	Fortune Quest	BBDaman Bakugaiden V	Beyblade G-Revolution	AmDriver	Angelic Layer	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		Smackdown				X-Men	The Batman	Experience		Mad TV		Just For Laughs	Scare Tactics	Distraction	Banzai	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	At Home With	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Intimate Portrait		Look For Less	Good Finds	Martha		E! True Hollywood Story		Your Private Island	Genuine Article
MTV Philippines		Handpicked Hale	VH1 All Access: Awesomely Bad Career Moves		Punk'd	The Hills	MTV Hits			Get Spoiled	Ultrasound Hale	TRL		Punk'd	The Hills	Rex in the City	Sessions Hale	VH1 All Access: More Celeb Breakups	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandarito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Megastructures		Naked Science		Top 5		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Wow!		Martial Arts Week					
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alas			Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Equilibrium		Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Dating Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Dating Daan		Ang Pagbubunyag		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Kosa				Awit Ni Cecilia				Laging Naroon Ka				Bangers				SP04 Antonio Cuervo Police
Qtv	Starry Night	Samurai X	Battle B-Daman	BB Daman Bakugaiden	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle		Family Zoo		News On Q	Women's Desk		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	The 4400		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Just For Laughs	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Friends Again		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports																Sportsdesk		Autofocus	
Star Movies			Mad Love			Big (5:15PM)				Mighty Joe Young (7:05 PM)				Death To The Supermodels			A Lot Like Love		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Hope & Faith	According To Jim	The Office	Two And A Half Men	The Drew Carey Show	Sons & Daughters	Seinfeld	Hope & Faith
Studio 23								Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup	Joey	Two And A Half Men	Will & Grace	Grey's Anatomy		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXlog

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Journalist groups doubt Putin's promise

MOSCOW—RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR Putin's promise to do "everything necessary" to track down those responsible for the murder of investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya has been greeted with skepticism by journalist rights organizations.

"It is impossible, unfortunately, to trust the Russian authorities to carry out this investigation in an impartial manner," said Elsa Vidal, the head of Reporters without Borders in Europe, in a comment published Wednesday in Russia's English-language daily The Moscow Times.

"Twenty-one journalists have been murdered with complete impunity, in connection with their work since Vladimir Putin became president in March 2000. None of these murders has been solved."

Politkovskaya, 48, was gunned down Saturday in what police said was a professional hit as she stepped from the lift of her apartment building in Moscow.

Putin, who has been criticized for not reacting to the murder earlier, said Tuesday during a trip to Germany that the murder was an "appalling" crime "that cannot go unpunished." "Whoever this was and whatever motives they and those who directed them had, they are criminals. They must be found, unmasked and punished. We will do everything necessary in this regard." But, he added, Anna Politkovskaya's "ability to influence political life in Russia was extremely insignificant." A star reporter at the twice-weekly Novaya Gazeta, she was virtually the last Russian journalist who dared to investigate atrocities in Chechnya and openly criticize Putin's rule.

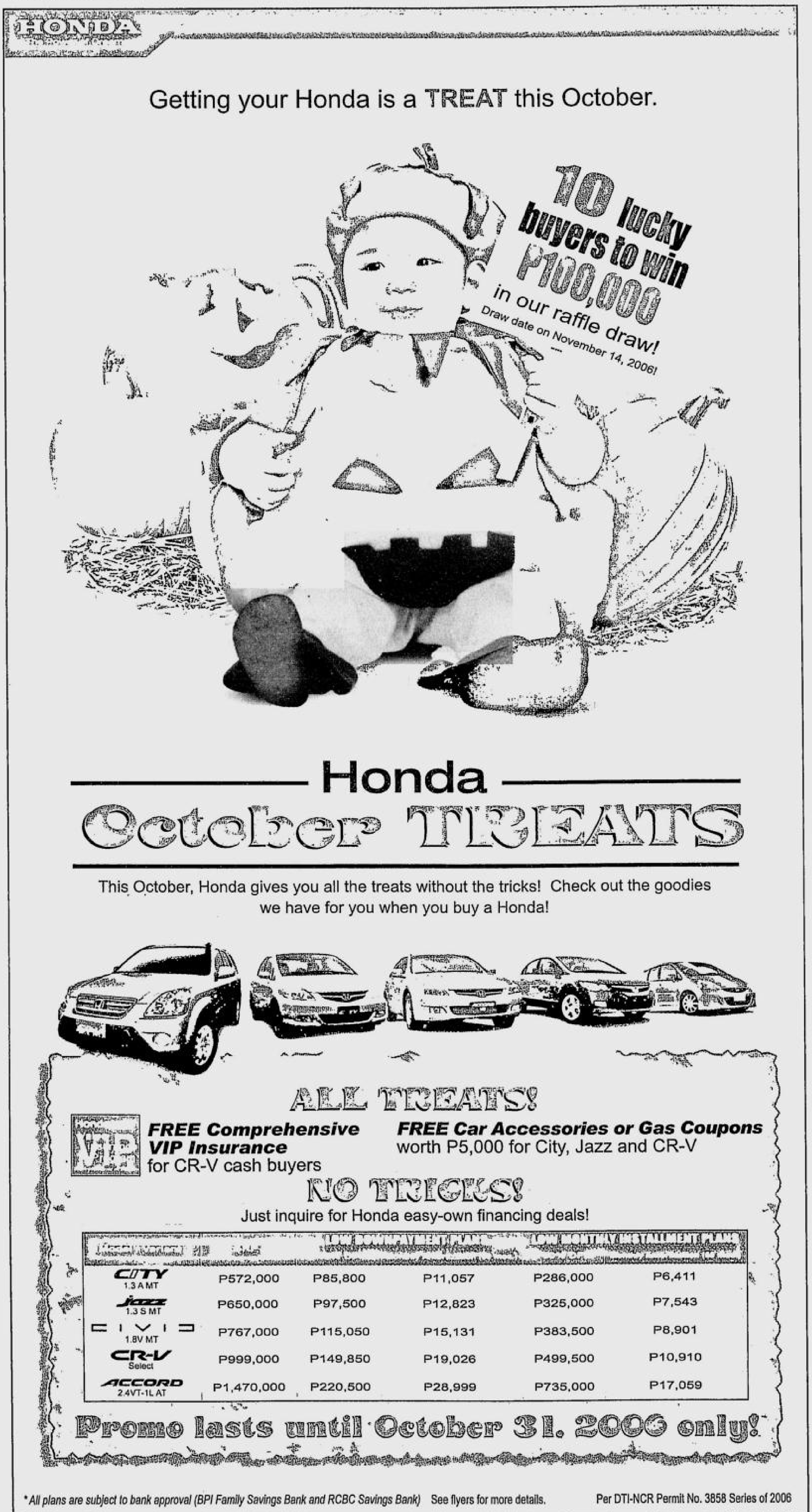
The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) slammed Putin's statement as a "backhanded attack" and said the Russian president needed to do more to ensure justice was done.

"Given the political realities in Russia no investigation can succeed without the complete and unequivocal support of President Putin," CPJ said in a statement.

"His backhanded attack on Politkovskaya's influence and credibility belies his commitment to justice." According to CPJ figures, at least 42 journalists have been killed in Russia since the Soviet collapse in 1991, with Politkovskaya the 13th journalist to die in a contract-style killing since Putin came to power in 2000.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Tuesday that the world was watching Russia's progress in investigating the murder.

"The Russian Government does have a heavy burden to demonstrate that it is both interested in and determined to find the killers of these journalists," she said in an interview on ABC television. "There have been too many of these and there have been too many that have been unsolved." Politkovskaya's funeral in Moscow drew an estimated 3,000 mourners on Tuesday, including several foreign ambassadors, but there were no high-ranking Russian government officials in attendance. *AFP*



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ENDANGERED. A new species of bird named Gorrion-montes de los Yariquies (Yariguies Brush-Finch) is seen in La Serrania de los Yariquies in Norte de Santander province, Colombia. The bird, whose scientific name is Atlapetes Latinuchus Yariguierum, was discovered recently by a Colombian-British team of scientists. REUTERS

Thailand to remain under martial rule

BANGKOK—THAILAND WILL REmain under martial law for about another month as the post-coup government lets political turbulence settle, Defense Minister Boonrawd Somtas said on Wednesday.

"We can't do it now although the situation looks settled. There are still underwater waves," he told reporters. "I think it may take about a month. We need to wait for the situation to be really resolved."

Boonrawd gave no details of what political undercurrents might be at play with Thaksin Shinawatra, ousted in the Sept. 19 coup, having quit as leader of the Thai Rak Thai (Thais Love Thais) party from London, virtually ensuring its break up.

Little opposition to the coup has been evident on the streets of Bangkok, where weeks of street demonstrations against Thaksin, twice a landslide election winner on the back of huge support in the countryside, led to political deadlock.

The military stepped in, saying it feared mass violence as Thaksin supporters in the rural heartland grew agitated.

The soldiers sent in to oust Thaksin were greeted with flowers and food and no one has been arrested yet under martial law, which bans political gatherings of more than five people.

On Wednesday, only 12 people turned up at Bangkok's Democracy Monument for a demonstration against martial law and to lay wreaths at its foot on the 9th anniversary of the "People's Constitution" which the military revoked.

Three policemen watched from a distance and 20 intelligence agents took pictures, but there were no arrests.

"I don't interpret this as a political gathering. It is a typical wreath-laying event that happens all the time at this monument," Police Capt. Ubonthep Thesakorn told Reuters.

The new government of Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont, a retired army chief, said it wanted martial law lifted as soon as possible, but is clearly deferring on the issue to the military, which has retained control of security.

General Winai Phattiyakul, one of the coup leaders, told reporters security agencies were weighing the pros and cons of lifting martial law before making a recommendation to the government.

"We need to listen to information from both security agencies and the Foreign Ministry before making a decision," Winai said. *Reuters*

Over 600,000 civilians killed in Iraq war—study

BAGHDAD—A TEAM OF US AND Iraqi public health researchers has estimated in a study that was released Tuesday that more than 600,000 civilians have died in violence across Iraq since the 2003 US invasion, the highest estimate ever for the toll of the war here.

The figure breaks down to about 15,000 violent deaths a month, a number that is quadruple the one for July given by Iraqi government hospitals and the morgue in Baghdad and published last month in a UN report in Iraq. That month was the highest for Iraqi civilian deaths since the US invasion.

But it is an estimate and not a precise count, and researchers acknowledged a margin of error that ranged from 426,369 to 793,663 deaths.

It is the second study by researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. It uses samples of casualties from Iraqi households to extrapolate an overall figure of 601,027 Iraqis dead from violence between March 2003 and July 2006.

The findings of the previous study, published in 2004, had been criticized as high, in part because of its relatively narrow sampling of about 1,000 families, and because it carried a large margin of error.

The new study is more representative, its researchers said, and the sampling is broader: It surveyed 1,849 Iraqi families in 47 different neighborhoods across Iraq. The selection of geographical areas in 18 regions across Iraq was based on population size, not on the level of violence, they said.

In late September, the government barred the Baghdad central morgue and the Health Ministry from releasing figures to the news media. Now, only the government is allowed to release figures.

The US military has disputed Iraqi figures, saying that they are far higher than the actual number of deaths from the insurgency and sectarian violence, in part because they include natural deaths and deaths from ordinary crime. But the military has not released figures of its own.

The mortality rate before the US invasion was about 5.5 people per 1,000 per year, the new study found. That rate rose to 19.8 deaths per 1,000 people in the year ending in June. *NYT*

SPORTS

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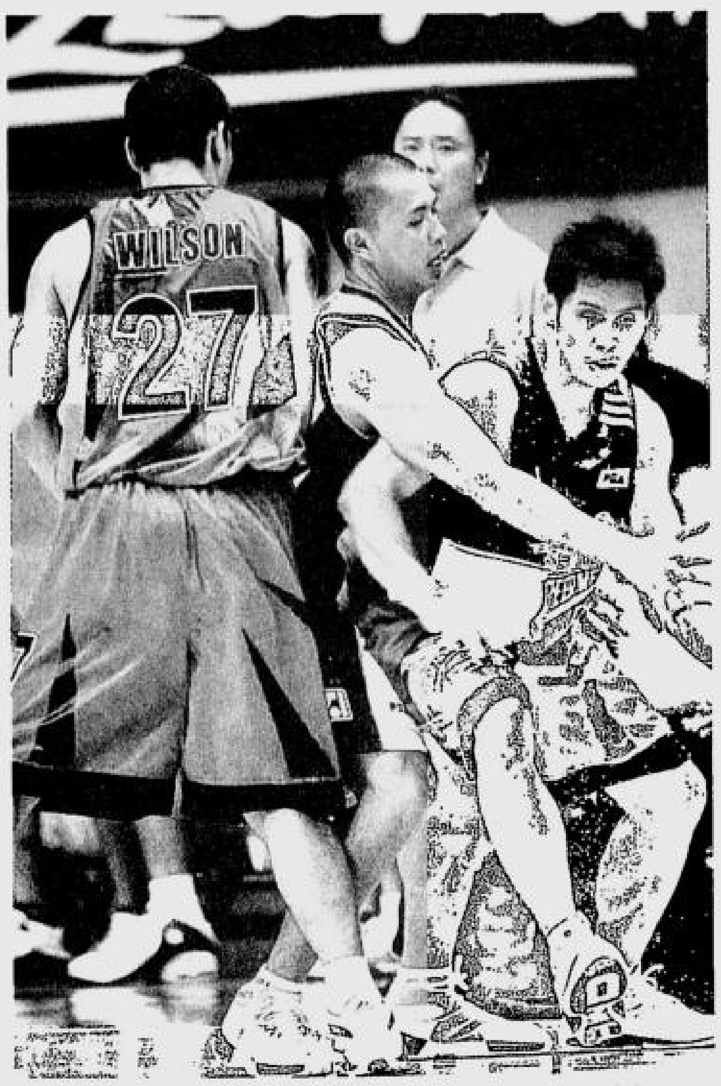

SAN MIGUEL gunner Dondon Hontiveros runs Sta. Lucia's Cesar Catli through a Willie Wilson pick. The Realtors defeated the Beermen, 98-95. *Story on A16.* AUGUST DELA CRUZ

From Lina to Jinggoy

Erap's son takes over as BAP president

By June Navarro

AFTER TAKING OVER THE LEADership of the Basketball Association of the Philippines unopposed, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada's first official act was to ask the Philippine Sports Commission to honor its old status as a national sports association.

Estrada, who replaced former senator Joey Lina as president during the BAP national congress yesterday, immediately requested PSC chair Butch Ramirez to unlock the BAP offices at the Rizal Memorial Sports Center and restore the funding it used to enjoy with the government.

"I told him (Ramirez) that if ever I accepted the post of BAP president, I will request that the PSC open the offices of the BAP," said Estrada. "I also requested that the funding for the organization be restored."

According to Estrada, Ramirez granted his first wish but didn't commit on the second request due to the current situation of the BAP with the Philippine Olympic Committee.

"He told me to fix the problem of the BAP (with the POC) so we could work together for the good of the sport," added Estrada.

JOEY Lina (left) with new BAP president Sen. Jinggoy Estrada after yesterday's national congress. EDWIN BACASMAS

The vice-chairman of the Senate committee on sports replaced Lina, who stepped down after unification talks with the three-man panel of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas bogged down over the weekend.

Lina said Manny V. Pangilinan and the BAP executive board have earlier agreed to install Lina as SBP president with the Smart and PLDT big boss to sit as chairman.

But reports said POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco had considered Lina's taking over the SBP presidency as unacceptable, which reportedly got the ire of Lina in return.

"I don't have any quarrel with Mr. Pangilinan and with Mr. Cojuangco so I hope we could work together smoothly for the sake of basketball," said Estrada. One hundred fifty-five members of the BAP attended the national congress.

Estrada pointed out that in traditional corporate practice, a chairman cannot function as president at the same time, referring to the posts to be handled by Pangilinan at SBP.

"You cannot simultaneously function as chairman and president. If ever that setup happens, there will be no check and balance in the organization," said Estrada.

"Between the officials of the PB and BAP, I suggest that the presidency of the SBP should be given to a more experienced organization like the BAP," he added.

Before accepting the post, Estrada consulted his parents, former president Joseph Estrada and senator Loi Estrada, who advised him that meddling into the affairs of the organization could get him into trouble.

"But because of my passion for basketball, I accepted the challenge just the same," said the 43-year-old actor-turned-politician.

"I'm assuring everybody that I will not use my position to further my political career," added Estrada, who hopes to sit down with the panel after Oct. 31.

Joey assails Peping intervention in SBP

THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMmittee should not interfere with the unification process of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas.

Joey Lina, the former president of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, yesterday said that the Olympic body should leave the three-man panel alone with respect to the SBP's election

JOEY/ A22

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Joey assails Peping intervention in SBP

From page A21

of officers.

"I don't understand why the POC continues to meddle when the stakeholders of the SBP have already agreed," said Lina, referring to the agreement between the BAP executive board and Manny V. Pangilinan last week.

The agreement was to install Lina as president while Pangilinan, chairman and CEO of Smart and PLDT, sits as chairman of the SBP before the new group asks for the blessing of the POC in order to lift the suspension of the International Basketball Federation.

Reports have it that Pangilinan consulted POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco over Lina's bid but the latter found it unacceptable.

In an official communication to the Fiba signed by the three-man panel, the panel said it intends to come up with the list of candidates acceptable to all to facilitate an orderly and peaceful election of officers.

Once completed, the panel intends to present such candidates to the board of trustees for acclamation during the unity congress.

"We agreed on a unity congress. All the officers will be elected by acclamation and we will submit the list to the Fiba for the lifting of the suspension," said Lina.

The SBP will then go through a transitory period before formally electing its set of officers on April 2007.

Despite his resignation, Lina remains a member of the SBP's board of trustees with Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the newly elected BAP president, taking over Lina's place in the three-man panel composed of Pilipinas Basketball president Bernie Atienza and Pangilinan.

Pangilinan, in an official statement, regretted Lina's resignation but said he still considers him a member of the three-man panel and a trustee of SBP as these positions are not coterminous with Lina's position as BAP president.

Lina has taken the slot of Graham Lim, who resigned from the SBP board of trustees the other day.

A total of 155 members from all over the country attended the BAP national congress yesterday at the Aloha Hotel.

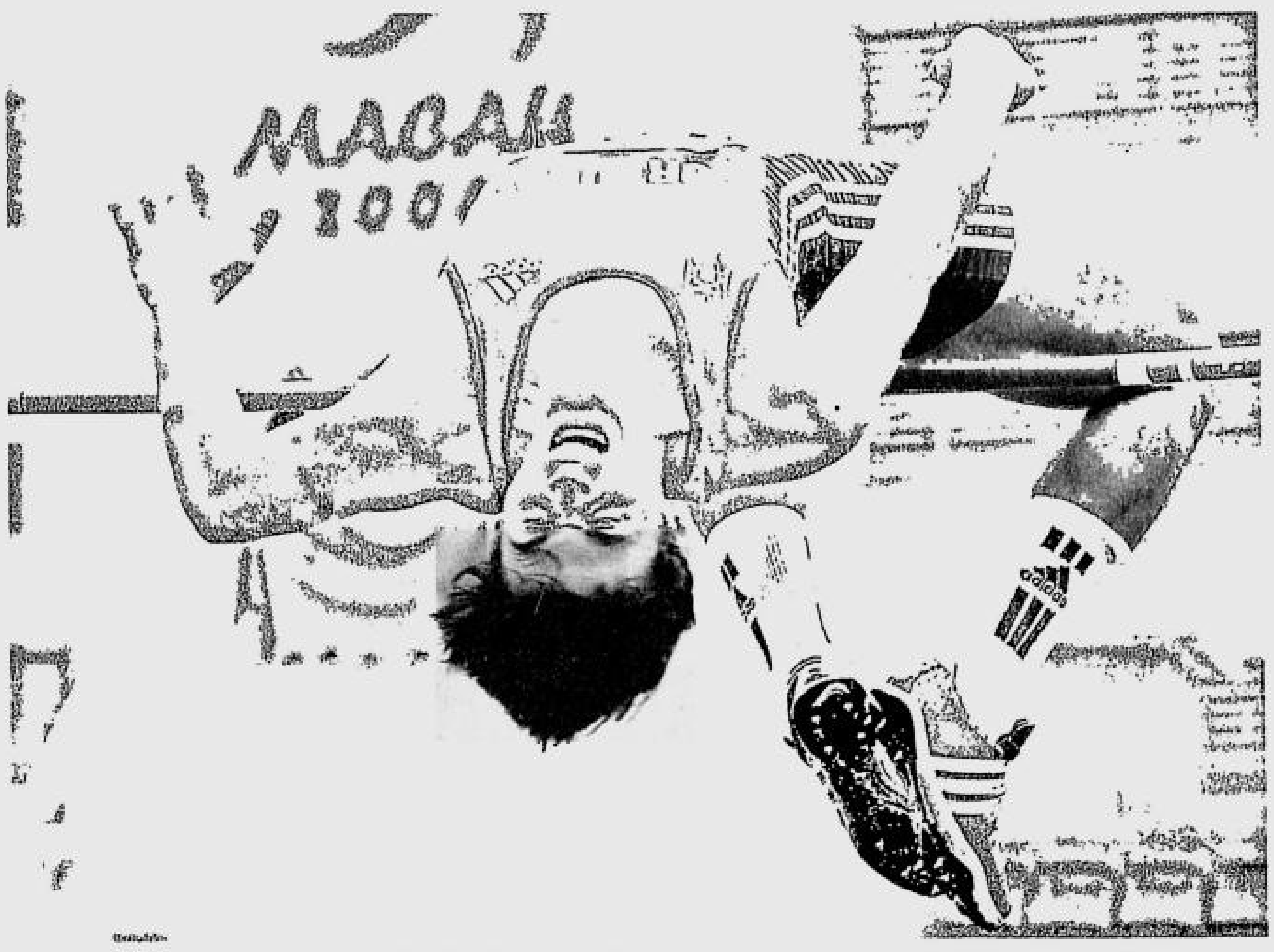
BAP chair Michel Lhuillier presided over the election of the 70-year-old organization with PCCr athletic director Rolly Tumapat nominating Estrada for president.

But the nominations were closed, Lim asked Lina to reconsider one last time.

Lina declined, saying it was better for him to step aside and allow other personalities and members of the BAP to take his place.

"We (with Lim) are not acceptable to the POC. Probably the other members of the organization are acceptable to them," said Lina.

Also present during the congress attended by representatives from the 66 member-organizations were Christian Tan (EVP), Wilson Young (VP for Luzon), Yayoy Alcoseba (VP for Visayas), Tony Fabico (treasurer) and BAP auditor Fritz Gaston.



CLEAR: Azevedo Goncalves Rafael Hipolito of Portugal clears the bar during the men's high jump at the First Lusofonia games in Macau, Oct. 11.

AFP

2 new teams join PBL's Silver Cup

By Jasmine W. Payo

AMATEUR CAGE ACTION GETS more competitive as two new teams join the Philippine Basketball League (PBL).

Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala and Mail and More will be competing in the season-opening tournament billed as the Silver Cup starting Nov. 11.

The league board approved the inclusion of the two squads as guest teams yesterday.

Luigi Trillo will call the shots for Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala, which will be back after a 20-year absence in the league.

"We have a long and colorful history with the PBL when it was still known as the PABL (Philippine Amateur Basketball League)," said owner Jean Henri Lhuillier.

Mail and More, one of the flagships of the Lina Group of Companies, will announce its head coach soon.

"We are grateful to the owners and officials of the two squads for believing in our vision and goals in the league," said PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad.

Both teams aim to beef up their rosters by tapping marquee collegiate players during the rookie draft tomorrow.

The newcomers hope to challenge the league's established teams like Harbour Centre and Magnolia Ice Cream for supremacy.

Deadline for submission of application for aspiring rookies has been extended until noon today.

Pido named Coach of the Year

PIDO JARENCIO OF NEWLY crowned UAAP champion Santo Tomas Tigers will be honored as Coach of the Year by the UAAP Press Corps when it holds its own awarding ceremony next week.

Jarencio, who was recently tapped as San Miguel's assistant coach in the PBA, impressively steered the Tigers to the championship on his debut season.

The overachieving Tigers stunned the favored Ateneo Blue Eagles in the best-of-three Finals series to end a 10-year title drought.

Other UST standouts who will be recognized include Finals Most Valuable Player Jojo Duncil as Mr. Clutch, Jervy Cruz as Defensive Player of the Year and Dylan Ababou as Sixth Man.

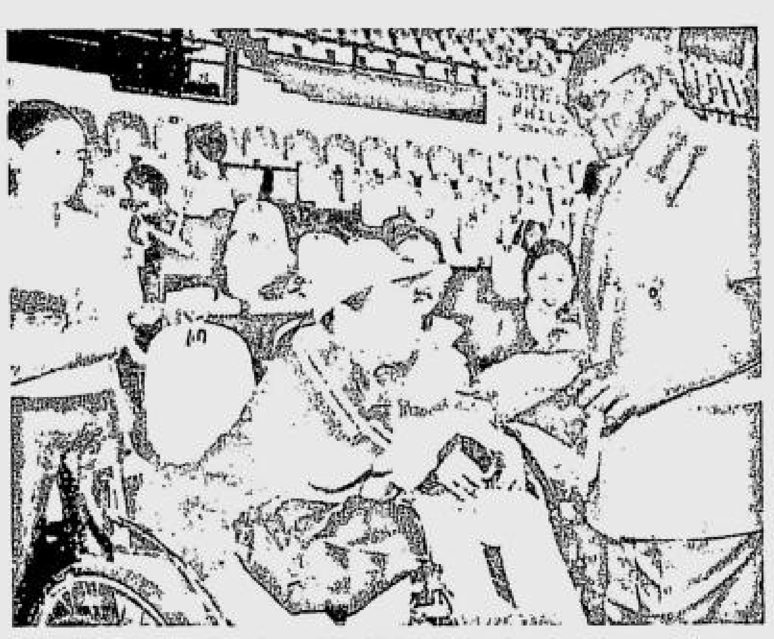
Ateneo's top gunner JC Intal will pick up the Player of the Year plum, while season MVP Ken Bono of the Adamson Falcons will be honored as Scoring Champion .

Other major awardees include University of the Philippines' Marvin Cruz as Most Improved and Ateneo's Chris Tiu as Comeback Player.

Marcy Arellano of the University of the East will receive the Energy Player award and Jeff Chan of Far Eastern University will get the Sportsmanship citation.

The awarding rites, revived after a four-year hiatus, will honor other collegiate cagers who displayed outstanding skills and leadership this season. Several team and school officials will also be given special recognition.

Jasmine W. Payo



BLIND sportsman Douglas Sidialo (right) shakes hands with an admirer.

Blind Kenyan leads way

KENYAN DOUGLAS SIDIALO, the most celebrated blind mountain climber and cyclist in Africa, recently visited The Blind Sports Federation in Pasig City. Sidialo gave an inspirational speech, saying that a can-do attitude can help people achieve more in life. He was a guest of Procter & Gamble Philippines president and GM James Lafferty, who served as his guide when he climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in 2005.

Grounded Archers try to keep their arrows sharp

By Jasmine W. Payo

IN A BASKETBALL COURT TUCKED IN ONE of the school's quiet halls, a powerhouse squad tried to seek approval from a surprisingly sizable Sunday crowd.

Winning the game wasn't the only goal. The day was another opportunity for the team to rebuild its disrupted cage program.

So for the La Salle Green Archers, it hardly mattered if the opponent was a raw motley crew in a league lacking in fanfare.

"Right now, I don't think we're really in game-shape," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren. "It's so hard if you don't really have good competition. It's just like a boxer. If you don't have a good sparring partner, it's hard."

"It's so hard to motivate the players when they know there's no existing tournament," added Pumaren, just minutes after the Archers overwhelmed the University of the East's Team B squad, 64-44, in the Fr. Martin's Cup at the San Beda gym last Sunday.

The blowout win produced none of the thrill of a regular UAAP game.

Slapped with a one-year suspension this season for inadvertently fielding two ineligible players the last two years, the Archers have come to terms with their fate.

They no longer mind the absence of a jam-packed crowd, the loud cheers and the pounding drumbeats. A decent number of La Salle alumni, at least, have been showing up in their games.

"The support is still there," said Pumaren. "They're raring to see us. Everybody's looking forward to next year."

It was the players' loyalty, though, that impresses Pumaren.

"Simon Atkins, one of the top three high school players last season, decided to stick with us," he said of the freshman point guard, a standout from 2005 UAAP champion La Salle Zobel.

Also debuting next season are 6-foot-6 Yugoslavian Marko Batricevic from La Salle Greenhills and Bader Malabes, 19, from Bahrain.

Pumaren isn't sure how the long layoff would affect the Archers next season.

"Every year, other teams improve," he said. "It's still too early to say if we're a Final Four-caliber type of team. It's still a long process."

Dagupan hosts Milo Marathon leg Sunday

DAGUPAN CITY HOSTS THE 30TH National Milo Marathon for the first time on Sunday when the country's biggest and longest-running foot race holds its 22nd leg.

Six finals berths—three each in the men's and women's divisions—are at stake in the 21K qualifying race. The top finishers will advance to the grand finale on Dec. 10 in Metro Manila.

Most of the 5,000 participants are joining the 5K fun run and the Kiddies 3K age-group race. Elementary and high school students run with their peers and get a chance to win trophies, medals and cash.

Also on hand for this Sunday's festivities held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas, Cebu Pacific, Department of Tourism and Powerbar are the inter-school running contest and the cheer-dance competition. A race day raffle will enable Dagupeños to win three P5,000 cash prize, one cellphone, basketball and Milo caps.

Mayor Benjie Lim has been invited by local organizer Tess Bernardino to fire the starting gun at 6 a.m. in front of the Dagupan City Museum. He will help hand the trophies and medals to the winners along with Milo Events Sports Executive Pat Goc Ong.

Mayor Alfonso Soriano of Malasiqui, Pangasinan, is joining the 5K run.

After the Dagupan City leg, the 30-leg Milo Marathon enters the homestretch with elimination races in Tacloban City on Oct. 22; San Fernando, La Union, on Oct. 29; Iligan City on Nov. 5; Dipolog City on Nov. 12; Cabanatuan City on Nov. 19; and Santiago, Isabela, on Nov. 26.

Last Sunday's elimination leg in Zamboanga City drew more than 3,500 participants.

BAP congress

In Huddle

Beth Celis

I SHOULD HAVE been in the thick of the action yesterday noon at the Aloha Hotel, but it was column day and I had a deadline to beat.

Most of my close colleagues were there, though, and I wasn't left completely in the dark while the action was ongoing, thanks to their on-the-spot updates.

At around noon, I got a situation report from a popular columnist . He said a lot of delegates nationwide had shown up for the BAP congress. BAP officials Michel Lhuillier and Yayoy Alcoseba, who flew in from Cebu, Tanduay's Wilson Young, Fritz Gaston and Christian Tan were on the presidential table, he informed me.

"Everyone is just having lunch, the program has not started yet," my colleague said.

On the day's agenda was a report coming from Joey Lina who resigned as BAP president a few days ago, and the election of his replacement.

There had been a number of nominees but by Tuesday night, word leaked out that Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, who had been a loyal friend of the BAP for years, had accepted the post.

Was he coming, I asked my colleague.

"He's on his way," my colleague replied.

***

I waited close to an hour before I called again. By this time, Joey's report and the election were over. There was much noise, much cheering in the background, as if there was a miting de avance going on.

"*Nagkakagulo dito,*" said my scribe-friend who was trying to get an interview with the new BAP president.

The group expected Estrada to replace Joey Lina in the three-man panel of the SBP, I was told.

Feeling that there might still be something lacking in the account, I called my veteran colleague to request for a summary.

***

"Well, there were 100 representatives from all over the country who attended," he started. "Joey Lina made an impassioned speech—he's a damn good speaker—and he gave a report on the latest developments in the BAP and the SBP. He stressed that he has no quarrel with Peping (POC president Peping Cojuangco) or MVP (Manny V. Pangilinan) and therefore expects no problem."

"Estrada was installed by acclamation. He said he will find time for this new job because he has a passion for basketball."

According to my colleague, the senator made no promises, except to say that he would give his best to help Philippine basketball.

"That's basically it. All the BAP officials were there except for deputy secretary general Lito Alvarez who excused himself from the congress because his PBA team had a game later that day," my colleague ended his report.

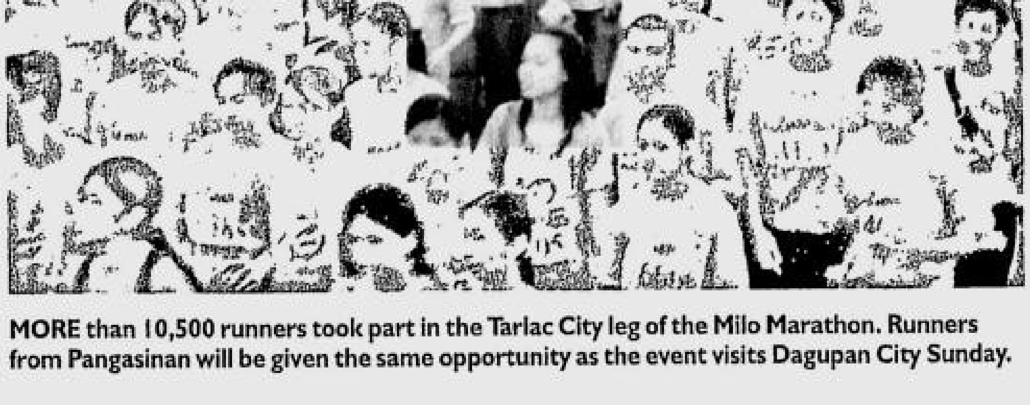
As of presstime, the media were awaiting an official reaction from SBP chair Manny Pangilinan.

***

HOOPVINE: Prompted by inquiries from dzME radio callers, I asked Talk 'N Text coach Derrick Pumaren if he knew what had prompted younger brother Dindo to expel Warrior Bonbon Custodio from the team.... I felt sure that Derrick knew, but he wasn't telling. "No comment," he said with a mischievous smile... I'm told that a trip to Beijing and Hong Kong Disneyland awaits the champion UST Growling Tigers, compliments of the academe. Just got an e-mail from former sports scribe Mon Datol who is now based in Canada. Mon announced his intention to run for mayor of Richmond Hill, Ontario, for two reasons: "One, there is a vacancy; and two, for Filipinos to get the recognition in the Canadian political arena. Good luck, Mon!

Wilcon, Hotshots hurdle BPAL rivals

WILCON BUILDERS DEPOT, MB HOTSHOTS AND GNC beat respective rivals Saturday to stay unbeaten in the elimination round of the Burlington Philippine Advocacy League basketball tournament at the San Andres gym in Manila. The WBP cagers ripped Burlington-Bio-Fresh, 158-51, while GNC routed Skynet Travel/Amadeus, 102-68, to post their third straight victories in as many starts in the Pilipinas Kong Mahal Division. In the day's most interesting contest, MB Hotshots bested Wilcon Builders Supply, 95-91, for a 3-0 record in the Bantay Bata 163 Conference with a 3-0 record. In other games, Wang's Ballclub routed PBA Press Corps, 120-74.



MORE than 10,500 runners took part in the Tarlac City leg of the Milo Marathon. Runners from Pangasinan will be given the same opportunity as the event visits Dagupan City Sunday.

Inter-province chess: Antonio, Torre teams favored

ANTONIO

THE TEAMS OF ROGELIO "JOEY" Antonio Jr. and fellow GM Eugene Torre are among the top favorites when the 2006 National Inter-Province Chess Team Championship gets underway on Oct. 26-31 at the Atrium Hall, Limketkai Mall in Cagayan de Oro City.

Antonio, fresh from winning the 2006 Batangas Open last week, will spearhead defending champion Tagaytay City of Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino Jr., also the National Chess Federation of the Philippines secretary general.

Completing the Tagaytay City team, which finished third in the recent 2006 National Inter-Cities and Municipalities Chess Team Championships in Davao City are Allan Macala, Edmundo Gatus and Ilann Perez. That event was topped by Carrascal, Surigao del Sur, which was supported by NCFP president and Surigao del Sur representative Prospero "Butch" Pichay Jr.

Torre will be teaming up with Mardonio Fuentes, Jayson Salubre, Rey Urbiztondo and head coach Dr. Reynaldo Feliciano for the Misamis Occidental chess team which is backed by Gov. Leo Ocampos and Misamis Occidental Aquarine Park (Moap).

At stake in the event organized by the NCFP in cooperation with the city and provincial governments of Misamis Oriental, is a total cash pot of P550,000 put up by Pichay and Misamis Oriental Gov. Oscar Moreno.

Also at stake is a beautifully crafted Governor Moreno Cup, which will go the champion team, aside from the P200,000 top purse. The runner-up will receive P100,000, the third placer P60,000 and the fourth placer P40,000.

For details, contact NM Rolly Tan 09189060800, Domingo Oga at 09195695386, Val Rosabal at 0916-4132694 and NCFP director and tournament chief Willy Abalos at 09204871453. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

RP 9-Ball Open billiards begins

BACK IN FULL FORCE AFTER FRUITFUL STINTS OVERSEAS, THE COUNTRY'S TOP POOL aces will serve as major attractions of the 2006 Philippine 9-Ball Open which starts today at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque City.

Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco (Django) Bustamante and Dennis Orcollo, all winners in their last tournaments abroad, are the favorites in the P1.3 million tournament organized by Solar Sports and offering P500,000 to the champion.

Reyes, unbeaten in his last three tournaments, the legendary Jose "Amang" Parica, 2004 World 9-ball kingpin Alex Pagulayan and 2005 World pool semifinalist Marlon Manalo make up the elite group of invited players.

Their opening rivals will be known after the special drawing of lots at 2 p.m. according to Fil-9 project head Eric Centeno.

The 43-year-old Bustamante, the defending champion, will face No. 32 John Salazar while Orcollo will tangle with No. 31 Alladin Duloa.

"This is a tough tournament so I just hope to do my best," said the former world No. 1 Bustamante, who successfully defended his title in the 2006 Bali Open in Bali, Indonesia, last month.

Bustamante also teamed up with Hall of Famer Reyes in winning the inaugural World Cup of Pool in Newport, South Wales, which started the victory run of Bata in late August.

Reyes resumed his winning ways at the IPT World Open Championship in Las Vegas where he captured the biggest purse in the sport of $500,000 before topping the fourth and final leg of the SMB Asian Tour in Jakarta.

The 27-year-old Orcollo, the acknowledged money game king in the local pool circuit, is fresh from winning the 2006 World Pool Leaque Invitational in Warsaw, Poland.

Antonio Gabica, the 2004 Fil-9 Ball Open winner, will meet No. 25 Richard Pornelosa with the winner facing the survivor of the match between No. 23 seed Antonio Lining and one of the four invited players. *Marlon Bernardino*

NBN: 7 hours of Asiad airtime

FILIPINO SPORTS FANS WOULD BE TREATED to at least seven hours of satellite coverage, including four hours on prime time when the National Broadcasting Network airs the Doha Asian Games in December. NBN-4 general manager Joey Isabelo made this assurance Tuesday as he announced that the government-owned network gained the rights to cover the quadrennial meet in Doha, Qatar. Though most of the games would be aired on a delayed basis, Isabelo said Filipino athletes competing in the medal rounds of their respective events would be shown live. The telecast of the Asiad will be made possible by NBN's tie-up with the Astra Group Inc., the marketing arm of the network tasked to finance the ambitious project from Dec. 1-15. *June Navarro*

MARCO Suntay returns a forehand against Nuttorn Tanchainant during the Asian 14 under series held at Rizal Racket Center in Pasig. EDWIN BACASMAS

Ferrer gains quarterfinals

FILIPINO JOSE LORENZO FERRER BESTED compatriot Kim Ivor Saraza, 6-4, 1-6, 6-4, yesterday to reach the boys' singles quarterfinals in the Asian 14-Under Series at the Ynares Socio-Cultural Sports Center outdoor courts in Pasig City.

Ferrer set up a meeting against second seed Korean Kim Ki-Hoon, who beat Kyle Cordero, 6-0, 6-1.

Top seed Filipino Francis Casey Alcantara outclassed Paul Nicole Magaway, 6-1, 6-1, and sixth seed Akio Sy downed Japanese Takamasa Takizawa, 6-2, 6-1, while No. 3 Nuttorn Tanchainant of Thailand outplayed Filipino Marco Suntay, 6-3, 6-3.

Alcantara will next play No. 5 Korean Jeong Joo-Wook, a 6-4, 6-3 winner over Japanese Rikuto Furuta, Sy will face No. 4 Korean Noh Sang-Woo, who scored a 6-0, 6-2 win over Filipino Roman Floreza, while Tanchainant will meet unseeded Rayadi Surya of Indonesia, who ousted No. 8 Korean Yoon Sun-Hong, 6-0, 6-1.

In the girls' singles, top seed Filipino Noelle Nikki Zoleta blasted compatriot Enah Baba, 6-0, 6-0, to advance in the quarters against sixth seed Japanese Fumika Kumagai, a 6-3, 6-1 winner over Filipino Mary Grace Rivero.

In other matches, No. 2 Korean Han Na-Lee defeated Victoria Louise Magaway, 6-2, 6-1, No. 3 Korean Lee Se-Won won over Jessica May of Brunei, 7-5, 7-5, No. 4 Malaysian Adelle Chia-Yan Boey prevailed over Filipino Jasmine Tan Ho, 6-2, 6-1, No. 5 Malaysian Huey Ting Sia downed Japanese Chinami Takada, 7-6 (3), 6-4, and unseeded Filipino Ma. Regina Santiago survived unranked Japanese Kaori Yamazaki, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-3.

CJH Asian Ladies golf set Oct. 17-19

BAGUIO CITY—MANILA SOUTHwoods-Masters looms as the top favorite with 2005 champion Wack Wack skipping the fourth CJH Asian Ladies Team Championship set Oct. 17 to 19 at the Camp John Hay Gofl Club here.

More than a hundred players representing the different ladies' chapters from Southwoods, Camp Aguinaldo, Baguio Country Club, Eagle Ridge, Forest Hills, Mount Malarayat, Tagaytay, and host John Hay are joining the 54-hole competition sponsored by Rudy Project, CJH Dev. Co. and CJH Manor.

The Southwoods-Masters—starring Carmelette Villaroman, Bernadette Abiera, Claudine Garcia and Sandy Velhagen—finished second last year behind Wack Wack.

Sources said the change in the schedule of the tournament from May was the reason the defending champion from Mandaluyong decided not to compete this time.

Expected to challenge Southwoods are Riviera and Villamor which placed third and fourth, respectively, last year.

Villaroman is also expected to defend her individual title.

"We expect an exciting tournament," said club general manager and tournament chair Jeric Hechanova, who is also busy preparing for the 57th Fil-Am Men's Invitational golf slated next month.

Three independent squads—Philippine Axa Life, Phoenix Ladies and Golf Divas—are also entered in the three-day test at John Hay's par-69 course, regarded by many as the "Augusta National of the Philippines" with its lightning-fast greens and undulating fairways.

Also supporting the tournament are Club Leisure Management Corp., Federal Management and Maintenance Inc., Le Chef at the Manor, Fila, Sustagen Premium, Wilson Sports, Golden Nutritious Food Corp., TSAJ Sales Inc., Palm Garden, Samsonite, Golforce Inc. and Mario's Restaurant.

The event officially kicks off with a team captain's meeting and free practice round for all participants on Monday (Oct.16) followed by welcome cocktails the next day.

There are three divisions with each team composed of four players with the best three rounds under the modified Stableford of scoring counting for the day.

Mizuno Scramble 4th leg slated at Orchard

THE MIZUNO SCRAMBLE GOLF Classic resumes this Saturday with the Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite, hosting the fourth eliminations leg at its Palmer course. Tee-off is shotgun style at 7 a.m.

The tourney will choose Orchard's representatives to the grand finals where winners of the nine qualifying stops hosted by top clubs in Luzon will dispute an all-expense paid trip to Japan at stake as the grand prize.

More than 72 member-member teams have signed up for the competitions in Division I, Division II and Division III based on average handicaps. The race for Division I is for those with handicap averages of 4 to 9.9, Division II for 10-16.9 and Division III for 17 to 36.

They will be joined by sponsors and special guests of Mizuno and Masters Sports Inc.

The Benner at the Riviera, Casino Filipino/Pagcor, BMW Philippines and Philippine Airlines are the major sponsors of the Mizuno Scramble Classic. Other backers are Citibank, Mail&More, Renee Barbier Wines, Discovery Suites, Pepsi, Gatorade, BMG Solar, Power Bar, Oakley, Citgo, C-Lium Fibre, INQUIRER Golf and Golf Digest Philippines.

There will be two qualifying legs this month with the Royal Northwoods in Bulacan hosting the fifth leg on Oct. 26. For inquiries, email scramble@mizuno.ph.

Already in the finals are the division winners in the three previous legs played at Valley, Sherwood Hills and Eagle Ridge.

Alvendia bucks car problems in Touring

BUCKING MECHANICAL PROBLEMS, PHILIP Alvendia of A3 Malayan Automaster posted respectable finishes recently on his comeback in the 2006 Philippine National Touring Car Championship at the Subic International Raceway.

Alvendia, a former Karter of the Year and Formula 3 driver, pulled ahead of Dennis Uy but a loose drive shaft hounded him midway the 15-lap race. Later, a big stone hit his radiator causing his car to overheat.

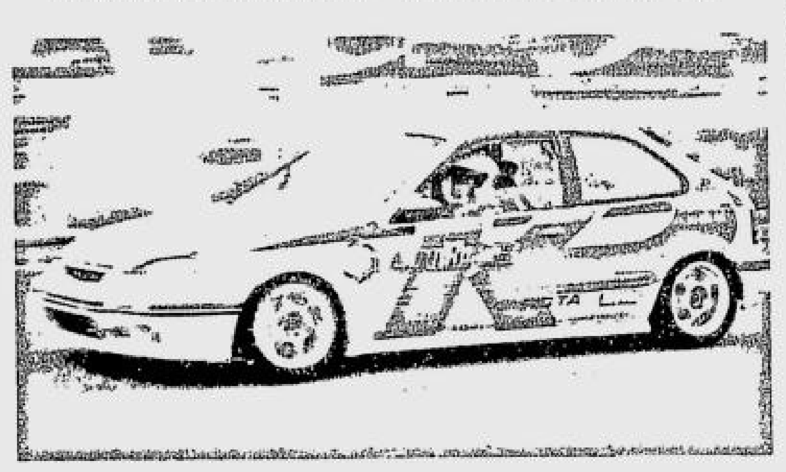
His E-R-S pit crew were able to fix the blown drive shaft but ran out of time to remedy the overheating problem due to the shortened servicing time interval between the races.

Alvendia wittingly banked on perfect pacing to conserve his car and his strategy proved worthy to secure a fifth place finish ahead of equally tough drivers Dennis Uy and Dominic Bon.

"I didn't get the first place trophy but surviving the challenge I faced during the race makes me feel like a winner," said Alvendia who's backed by Malayan Automaster, MOTUL Oils, Fremuff Mufflers, Rota Wheels, Auto Transporter and Pintura King.

"We have a renewed spirit and have prepared well for the races, but it appears that luck is still not on our side," said Alvendia. "The stone that hit my radiator really caused a lot of problems as car overheats at the slow curves and cools down at the fast straights.

Alvendia moved up from 10th to seventh overall in the Group 1 Petron Blaze Super Saloon Cup.


PHILIP Alvendia drives the new 2006 A3 Motorsports Malayan Automaster Racing Team Livery to a good finish despite the onset of car problems.

SPORTSWATCH

Alam Mo Na 'Yan run Saturday

ON OCT. 14 6 A.M., ALAM MO NA 'YAN—101.9 FOR LIFE! KICKS OFF AT the Quirino Grandstand for "Run... For Life!" a benefit event for Ospital ng Maynila. Now on its third year, "Run... For Life!" features a three-kilometer run for kids 12 years old and below, and a five and 10-kilometer distance for older participants. Cash prizes of 1,500 await the kiddie boys and girls category champion; P3,000 for the male and female 5K division winners; and P10,000 for the fastest male and female 10K finishers. For P150, register at the dzMM Public Service Center, ABS-CBN Foundation Bldg., Mother Ignacio St., Quezon City.

Labanan goes to Pasig Oct. 15

ELIMINATION ROUNDS IN METRO MANILA OF NO ENTRY FEE LABANAN 7-STAG derby, with P1.3 million at stake, shifts to the Pasig Square Garden on Sunday. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. PSG operator Butch Nuñez said 45 cockers, including guest entries from Rizal, have confirmed their entries on the 3-stag elimination round. Conceptualized by Patrick Antonio, Labanan requires no entry fee. Only a proof of purchase of any Sagupaan products worth P1,000 must be presented by participants. Five cockers have posted three wins each from Monday's opening round held at San Juan Coliseum. Action at SJC resumes on Oct. 16; Pasay City Cockpit (Oct. 20) and Araneta Coliseum (Oct. 24 and 26). Call 0916-4763030 (Ariel) or 0917-8064758 (Neil).

Las Piñas cockfest today

SMALLTIME COCKERS AND HACKFIGHT ENTHUSIASTS FROM MUNTINLUPA, Parañaque, Pasay, Las Piñas, Cavite and Laguna clash in today's Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan at 9 a.m. at Las Piñas Coliseum. Host Arki dela Cruz said the fastest win champion will receive P35,000; second, P15,000 and third, P10,000. Fourth to 15th placers will get P5,000 each. Meanwhile, coliseum manager Alex Tobias announced yesterday that the DMC 4-stag derby originally set on Oct. 14, will instead be held on Oct. 15. At least 40 participants are seeing action on Sunday, said host Marlon de Castro. Contact 874-3910, 873-1040 and 0926-7450375 (Julius).

150 fights slated at San Juan Coliseum

IT'S CHAMPIONSHIP OR BUST FOR 100 QUALIFIERS AS THE 1ST PHILIPPINE Open 6-stag derby finals get underway today at San Juan Coliseum. With 150 fights on tap, competition starts at noon. Elimination rounds of this event were held at the Araneta Coliseum last Oct. 3, 5, 7 and 10. However, due to the big number of fights that cannot be accommodated, the derby hosts decided to transfer at SJC today. Hosts TJ Marquez, Sam Mendoza and Boy Torres expressed their gratitude to the SJC management for accepting their last minute request. The winners stand to receive a guaranteed prize of P2 million, including the brand new Toyota Vios for the fastest win champion. Call 725-5369 and 725-5665.

LGBA series 3rd leg at Araneta

THE THIRD LEG OF THE LUZON GAMECOCK BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (LGBA) 5-stag derby series resumes today at the Araneta Coliseum. The "straight five stags" format will be adopted today and on Oct. 17 and 19. Action starts at noon with over 100 fights on tap in the event backed by B- Meg Derby Ace, Gran Matador, Purina, Thunderbird, Lakpue Drug Inc., Asvet and Excellence. Dalwin Yulangco's Angel Ace Supreme entry tallied nine victories to lead the 295 participants who took part in LGBA series' first two legs. BMJ DMCA Red of Boy Gamilla, Raffy Campos, Edwin Aranez and Mimi Itchon has 8.5 points. Tied in third spot with 8 points are Edwin Ramos (AP Top Gun), Louie Madlambayan and Edwin Jingco (LDM and EJ), Raffy Campos and Company (BMJ Mimi Red), lawyer Joey Mendoza (RPS Tagapo Farms), Benny Lim (Sangre Guerrero) and Vice Gov. Windell Chua and John Daguio (Red Star). Call 911 -2928 and 911-3101 for inquiries.

Bautista heads Hold'em nat'l qualifiers

ED BAUTISTA, A NEW CONVERT in poker, led four other qualifiers to the grand finals of the Million-Peso Hold'em Philippine Championship that will be held Dec. 16-17 at Casino Filipino Pavilion.

Aside from Bautista, the other survivors of the seven hour competition held over the weekend at Casino Filipino Angeles were Chris Petit, Pio Samson, Bryce Iwamoto and Arthur Gregorio.

They will join other satellite winners to the P3-million yearend event of the Philippine Poker Tour (PPT).

Thomas Pollina and Donahue Vanderhider, who barely missed the finals, were given free entry free passes for the next satellite event.

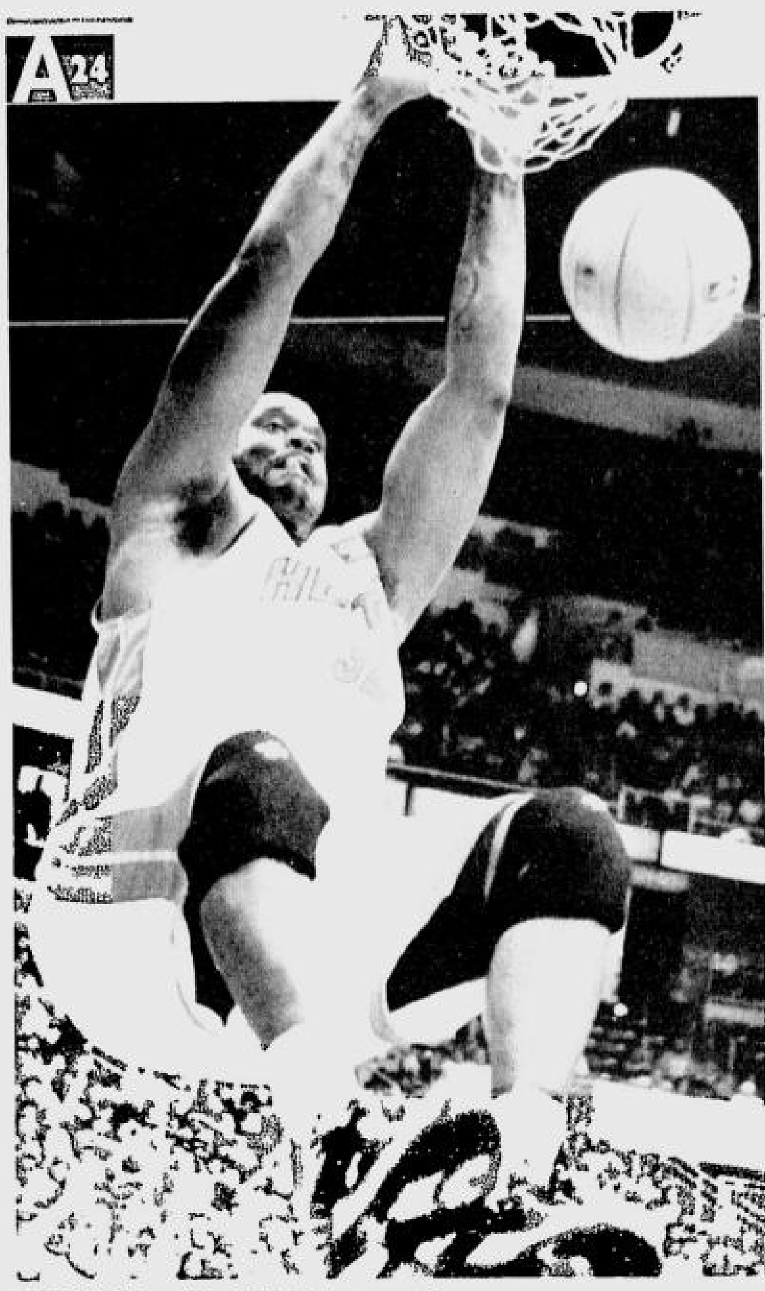
On Saturday, another satellite tournament will be hosted by Casino Filipino Tagaytay.

PPT chair Rey Gamboa announced that the Tour will move to the Visayas starting on Oct. 21 with the holding of the Bacolod Hold'em Challenge. The Cebu-Lahug Hold'em Challenge is set Oct. 28.

For details, visit www.PhilippinePokerTour.com or call Cindy at 817-9092 or 812-0153.

DR. Jenny T. Mayor, NCFP director and countryside development program chair of Prospero "Butch" Pichay, a six-time RP executive grand prix champion. From left to right: Leopoldo Quiñones Jr., Surigao del Sur NCFP coordinator Bert Pacate, Rey Selades, Gov. Vicente Pimentel Jr. of Surigao del Sur, Dr. Mayor, Andy Ypamaguire and Cyrus Donasco

SPORTS



MIAMI'S Shaquille O' Neal slams one home. REUTERS

Pistons rip Heat in Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO—Nazr Mohammed had 16 points and eight rebounds to lead the Detroit Pistons to an 84-64 victory over Miami on Tuesday night as the Heat's Shaquille O'Neal and Dwyane Wade watched most of the exhibition game from the bench.

The two came out of the game with the defending NBA champions leading, 13-12, in the first quarter, and the Pistons quickly took a lead they never relinquished in the preseason opener for both teams.

Reserve guard Carlos Delfino added 15 points for Detroit. Jason Kapono led the Heat with 12 points, while Dorrell Wright added 11.

The Pistons, who lost to the Heat in six games in last season's Eastern Conference finals, took the court for the first time since losing Ben Wallace, who signed in the offseason as a free agent with the Chicago Bulls.

O'Neal and Wade returned to the lineup at the start of the second half, with the Pistons leading 42-32. But Detroit opened the third quarter with a 13-6 run, taking a 55-38 lead on a three-point play by Mohammed after he was fouled by O'Neal.

Heat coach Pat Riley pulled O'Neal and Wade midway through the third quarter.

O'Neal, who has complained about the feel of the new microfiber composite basketballs that replaced the old leather models, had four errors in 17 minutes. He finished with seven rebounds and four points. *AP*

Fiery Tigers continue romp, crush Athletics

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA—BRANDON INGE hit a solo home run and RBI double from the bottom of the order, Ivan Rodriguez also homered and Nate Robertson pitched the Detroit Tigers past the Oakland Athletics, 5-1, Tuesday in Game 1 of the American League championship series.

The Tigers battered Barry Zito, turned four double plays and once again relied on their flame-throwing relievers. Only one thing went wrong: Sean Casey, Detroit's No. 3 hitter, left early because of an injured left calf and expected to be out for a couple of days.

Game 2 in the best-of-seven series—a rematch of the 1972 ALCS—is Wednesday night, with Oakland's Esteban Loaiza facing Justin Verlander.

Fresh off surprising the New York Yankees in four games in the opening round, the typically free-swinging Tigers worked the count against Zito.

"We thought if we slowed down against him a little bit, it would work a little better," Inge said.

The A's ace retired the first eight batters he faced before running into trouble, with 10 of the last 13 Tigers facing him reaching base on the way to a 5-0 lead.

"After that I started to nitpick a little bit instead of coming right after them," Zito said. "This is the playoffs. If you don't get ahead in the count it becomes more exposed than in the regular season."

The wild-card Tigers showed off their gloves, too, tying a league championship series record for double plays, last accomplished by the San Francisco Giants exactly 19 years earlier—on Oct. 10, 1987.

Robertson, who lost Game 1 against the Yankees in his postseason debut, threw five shutout innings to win for the first time in the Coliseum. The 29-year-old lefty struck out the side to escape a fourth-inning jam after Frank Thomas drew a leadoff walk and Jay Payton doubled him to third.

Oakland never trailed in its division-series sweep of the Minnesota Twins, taking quick leads in all three games. *AP*

DETROIT Tigers Carlos Guillen (left) leaps out of the way as Oakland Athletics' Jason Kendall is forced out at second base. REUTERS

NY Yankees keep Torre, A-Rod

NEW YORK—JOE TORRE WILL REmain as manager of the New York Yankees, finally getting the word from owner George Steinbrenner after the team's surprise elimination from the Major League Baseball playoffs last weekend.

Torre spoke with Steinbrenner on the phone Tuesday, shortly before he walked into the interview room at Yankee Stadium and made the announcement.

"I'm just pleased I'm able to stay on and do this," Torre said.

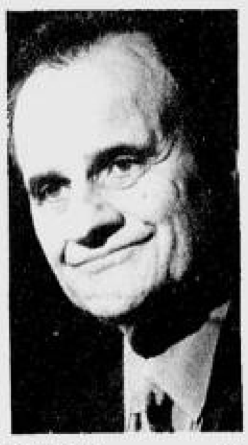
Yankees GM Brian Cashman, meanwhile, expects Alex Rodriguez to also stay a Yankee despite a tough season by the league's highest paid player.

Rodriguez, who earns $25 million a year, has been a target of the Yankee Stadium boo-boys and struggled so badly with the bat during the first-round playoff defeat by Detroit he was dropped to eighth in the order by Torre.

"I know Alex is as disappointed as all of us about the (Detroit) result but I expect him to be back next year," Cashman said.

Torre didn't go into detail about his conversations with Steinbrenner.

After the Yankees were eliminated by the Detroit Tigers—the second straight time they were gone in the first round—there was much speculation about what Steinbrenner would do with his 66-year-old manager and Rodriguez. *AP, Reuters*



TORRE AFP

For Woods, Vardon Trophy boils down to a phone call

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA—TIGER Woods has until 5 p.m. Friday to decide whether he wants to win the Vardon Trophy.

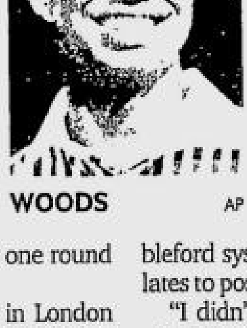
That's the deadline to enter the Funai Classic at Disney, and Woods might consider playing for no other reason than he needs to reach 60 rounds to be eligible for the Vardon Trophy, awarded to the player with the lowest scoring average. Woods has 55 rounds on the PGA Tour, so playing only in the season-ending Tour Championship would leave him one round short.

It was quite clear two weeks ago in London that Woods either had not made up his mind or wasn't about to tell anyone. During a practice round at the American Express Championship, he was asked what he was thinking about Disney and offered the following insight:

"Big company. They make some good movies. A lot of theme parks."

Woods has won the Vardon Trophy six times already, more than anyone since it began in 1937. Rounds played became an issue this year because he withdrew after two rounds from the Nissan Open with the flu, missed the cut for the first time in a major at the US Open, and missed nine weeks coping with the death of his father.

Even if Woods skips Disney, he still will be recognized as having the lowest scoring average.



WOODS AP

The PGA Tour gives out the Byron Nelson Award for lowest scoring average, which is the same thing as the Vardon except the tour only requires a minimum of 50 rounds.

Whatever he decides to do, Woods' pursuit—or lack thereof—has shed light on a couple of oddities involving the award. For example, the PGA Tour counts rounds played at the Accenture Match Play Championship and the International (with its modified Stableford system), even though neither format relates to posting a score.

"I didn't know that," Woods said, and when asked whether Accenture should count, he added, "No. It's match play."

And no one is sure how the PGA of America, which administers the Vardon Trophy, came up with a 60-round minimum in 1988. When the PGA Tour began keeping statistics in 1980, it settled on 50 rounds as a minimum to be eligible for its award for lowest scoring average.

Why 50?

"The 50-round rule is loosely tied to participation in official money events," said Andy Pazder, vice president of competition for the PGA Tour. "So rounds at the Accenture—much like the International, where we don't keep scoring stats—those count toward meeting a participation level." *AP*

Paeng joins Asiad sans partner

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PAENG NEPOMUCENO WILL BE BACK BUT he will miss his partner RJ Bautista in the Asian Games in Doha this December.

The gold medal-winning duo during the 2002 Busan edition parted ways after Bautista begged off because of his work schedule, according to Philippine Bowling Congress secretary general Dr. Danny Santos yesterday.

Santos said Bautista stopped playing to concentrate on his career as a flight steward for Philippine Airlines. He also didn't play in the Asiad qualifying events.

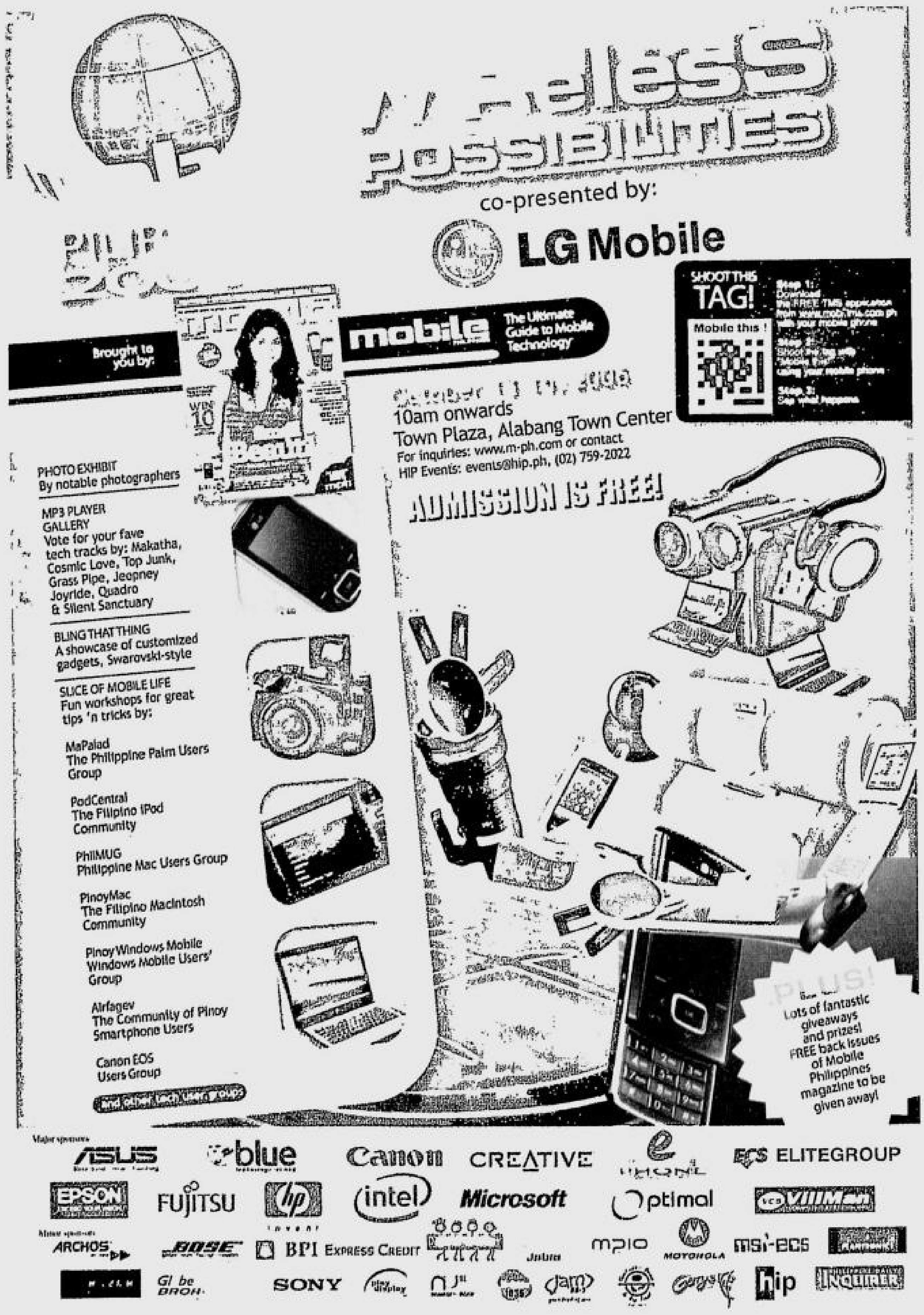
"When he heard that defending champions have outright slots in Doha, we regretted it because he stopped training altogether," said Santos of Bautista.

Nepomuceno and Bautista won one of the three golds RP snared in the previous Asian Games. Bowling again is expected to deliver the goods in Doha along with Busan winners in billiards and equestrian.

The PBC has yet to name his replacement at the men's doubles slot but Santos said the team remains formidable and is in contention to surpass its previous Asian Games performance when they roll into Qatar on Dec. 1-15.

Meanwhile, newly crowned ABF Tour Hong Kong leg champion Jojo Cañare will skipper the star-studded female roster.

Cañare, the 1997 Southeast Asian Games champ, will also represent the country in the World Cup in Caracas, Venezuela, next month along with fellow Asian Gamer Markwin Tee.



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A new record has been set on just one full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded.

IMF lauds economic gains in RP

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Says external vulnerabilities declining

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES' EXTERNAL VULNERABILITIES remain high but are coming down, as opposed to the policy drift that caused ballooning public debts and foreign financing burden from 2002 to 2004, the International Monetary Fund said.

In a draft report on its mid-2006 Post-Program Monitoring on the Philippines, the IMF recognized significant gains from the package of economic reforms launched by the Arroyo administration two years ago.

"Implementation was initially slow due in part to political developments, while surging international oil prices threatened to derail the extension of VAT (value-added tax) to energy products, a key component of the fiscal reforms," the report said.

"However, the authorities have persevered with reforms and considerable progress has been made," it noted.

The IMF's post-program monitoring provides for frequent consultations between the IMF and members whose funding arrangements have expired but continue to have outstanding credit. Particular focus is placed on policies that have a bearing on external viability.

The IMF noted that a number of major milestones had been achieved, particularly the reduction of the non-financial public sector deficit through tight controls on government spending and a marked turnaround in the finances of National Power Corp.

"Economic vulnerabilities have thus declined and financial markets have taken note. However, the reform momentum will need to be sustained for there to be a significant improvement in economic performance," the IMF said.

Given the current policy path, the IMF said the country could post a domestic economic growth of 5.5 percent in 2007 from 5 percent this year, but expansion could be significantly higher over the medium-term on the back of additional reforms that would cut more substantially the public debt and boost investor confidence and investment.

"The main downside risks to the outlook are a renewed surge in oil prices and a slowdown in

IMF LAUDS/ B2

Cebu Pacific flies to Kuala Lumpur

CEBU PACIFIC

GOKONGWEI: "We're proud to be the only Filipino carrier operating on the Manila-Kuala Lumpur route."

By Riza T. Olchondra

CEBU PACIFIC WILL START flying a direct service from Manila to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, four times a week starting Nov. 30.

Cebu Pac will operate from the KL International Airport's Low Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT) with ground handling facilities to be provided by Kuala Lumpur Airport Services (KLAS).

"We're proud to be the only Filipino carrier operating on the Manila-Kuala Lumpur route. With the opening of this new regional destination, we hope to stimulate travel for both leisure and business sectors which will definitely benefit the economies of both the Philippines and Malaysia," Cebu Pacific president and CEO Lance Gokongwei said in a statement.

The Manila-Kuala Lumpur service will be operated using Cebu Pacific's brand new Airbus A319 aircraft and is scheduled to operate every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The flight departs from Manila at 8:55 p.m., arriving in Kuala Lumpur at 12:25 a.m. the following day. The flight then leaves Kuala Lumpur at 1:10 a.m. and arrives in Manila at 5 a.m.

The airline will launch its

CEBU/ B2

Gov't debt at ₱3.92T in end-July

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S debt stock dipped by 1.9 percent month-on-month to P3.92 trillion in July given the appreciation of the peso and the growth in revenue collection that allowed it to borrow less and pay more maturing obligations during the month.

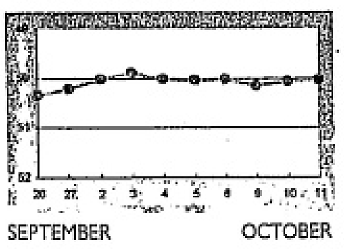
If divided among the country's estimated 85 million population, the share of each Filipino of the government's debt burden would be P46,164.

The outstanding debt stood at

GOV'T/ B2

INDICATORS

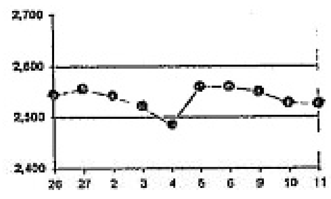
CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 50.02 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 10, 2006



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close flat

SHARE PRICES CLOSED FLAT YESTERDAY, with investors finding no fresh leads after modest losses earlier this week sparked by concerns over North Korea's nuclear test, dealers said.

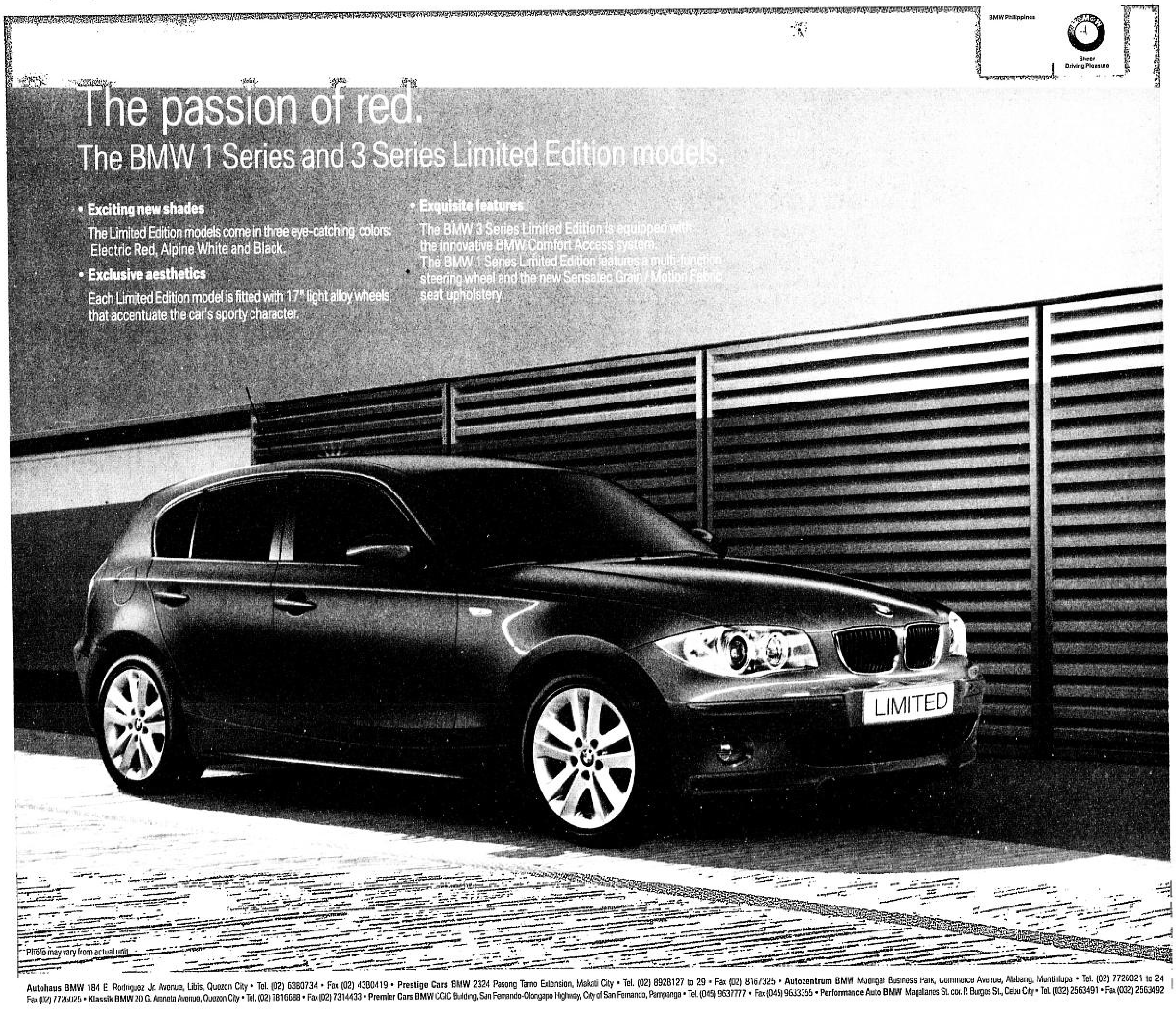
They said losses in index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. offset gains in Ayala Land Inc.

The composite index fell 1.71 points to 2,527.27 after moving in a narrow range between 2,521.89 and 2,531.71.

Decliners narrowly led gainers 43 to 42 with 57 unchanged. Turnover was 1.27 billion shares valued at P3.47 billion.

"The market consolidated in the absence of catalysts, with investors largely focused on the lower-liners," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities.

PLDT, the most briskly traded stock, fell P15 to P2,175. Leading property developer Ayala Land rose 25 centavos to P13.75. *AFP*


BMW Philippines
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Stink or swim

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AT LONG LAST, THIS CUTE ADministration of Gloriaetta is taking a keen interest in our "competitiveness."

Now that has nothing to do with sports, although supremacy in sports is a sure sign of any country's economic power and the shape of its politics, which shows a lot in our local sports scene. Take a bow, BAP!

Actually, "competitiveness" has everything to do with the affluence of the people.

The 2006 World Competitiveness Yearbook ranked us 49th of 61 countries.

To think that only six years ago in 2000, before this cute administration took power, this country ranked No. 35!

In short, we are sinking.

And so last week in Malacañang, the country's top decision makers (including Cabinet members, who may or may not actually be inclined to make tough decisions for fear of Gloriaetta's temper) held a "competitiveness summit."

They agreed in effect on the things that we needed to do—you know, more infrastructure, new power plants, better education, and less red tape.

What they agreed on during the summit can be summed up as this cute administration's much-awaited "reform package."

It is in fact a serious plan, something that is believable, able to inspire business confidence. Really now, business does not want fantastic dreams such as the latest State of the Nation Address.

They just need a sign, for instance, that this cute administration is dead serious in improving our sorry infrastructure.

Look, the medium term economic plan of this cute administration dreams of about 600 infrastructure projects.

Gloriaetta's latest Sona reduced the number to 120 "priority" projects.

In the "competitiveness summit," they figured that only 20 "impact" projects must be done immediately, such as the Naia 3 airport terminal and the MRT extension.

Reforms, reforms, reforms! It's the call of the times. And the summit provided this cute administration a workable package of reforms.

Yes, children, there is hope.

Sadly, we did not see that much media interest in the event. I don't know, but can it be that somebody at the Palace is sleeping on the job?

* * *

FROM A return on equity (or ROE) of only 5 percent in 2000, medium-size Security Bank is doing at 19 percent ROE this year, which is much better than many other banks, big and small alike.

That is one highly competitive bank. In fact, Security Bank's phenomenal rise in profitability made the fund managers in Wall Street sit up and take notice.

It was one of only two local banks that were recently invited to New York to make a pitch to the fund managers.

What makes Security Bank different? Traditionally, banks just wait for the clients to come to them. Security Bank turned it upside down. It spent a fortune to train a "sales force" that goes out to the field to find clients.

In fact, Security Bank president Alberto Villarosa gets nervous when a certain branch manager is always in the office.

Now the bank is venturing first in real estate mortgage. I hear that, if plans do not miscarry, it will soon have a tie-up with one of the more aggressive real estate companies in the country today, which has projects all over Metro Manila.

Also, one thing going for Security Bank is its image as an independent bank. The controlling shareholder, Frederick Dee, has no other business except the bank. He may have no interest in the trade secrets of the bank's clients.

Which, of course, you can hardly say about other banks!

* * *

ACCORDING to a survey, 87 percent of the consumers who look up the "yellow" pages in the telephone directory, actually dial a number; and half of that 87 percent make a purchase within 24 hours.

And the company called DPC, or Directory Philippines Corp., is using such an established fact about its market to improve its ... well, "competitiveness."

It plans to introduce an innovative service for the users of the "yellow" pages. And that is, "canvassing."

If, for instance, you are looking for an auto repair shop, and you find some 300 of them listed on the "yellow" pages, I say you'll need a mental repair if you call all the numbers.

DPC now wants to do the canvassing for you. Free of charge!

It has the capability, thanks to the high-tech savvy of its relatively new president, Ricardo Bautista.

A few years ago, the company went electronic — meaning, "IT." Even then, it wanted to use its wealth of data on business establishments with telephone lines, which should be everybody.

In effect, DPC was the first "call center" in the country, employing an army of call receivers to service its clients, long before the term "call center" touched the lips of the babes in this cute administration.

How does it make money from the innovation? Bautista said that it should offer businesses another reason to advertise in the yellow pages.

Data in their ads will be used for the canvassing service.

I just think that our mothers-in-law will love the service.

Looking for higher yield deposits?

Come to the Philippines' specialists in Australian and New Zealand deposits and investments.

For a limited period only, ANZ¹ is offering you the opportunity to reap the rewards of substantially higher interest rates offered in Australian, New Zealand and United States Dollars at special promotional rates.²

For 3-month Term Deposit (p.a.)	AUD	NZD	USD
20,000 – 49,999	5.015%	6.26%	3.74%
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ANZ

Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation. Maximum Deposit Insurance for each Depositor PHP 250,000.00

IMF lauds ...

From page B1

the global economy," the IMF said.

The report said the strong performance of remittances and exports helped insulate the current account from surging oil prices while there was likewise a pick-up in foreign direct investments this year.

The peso depreciated during the emerging market turbulence in mid-May but had recovered strongly since then, allowing the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to resume its purchases of dollars, the IMF noted.

The authorities have also used the greater availability of foreign exchange to repay short-term external debt.

"The debt profile looks more favorable," the IMF said, noting that as a result of the lower fiscal deficit, continued robust growth and the stronger peso, the non-financial public sector debt declined to 86 percent of gross domestic product at end-2005 compared to 100 percent at end-2003.

"External debt has declined by a similar order of magnitude," the IMF said.

Gov't debt ...

From page B1

P3.998 trillion as of end-June.

The month-on-month drop in the national government's debt did not mean it already stopped borrowing, but that the amount of liabilities it paid in July was higher than the amount it borrowed during the month.

Of the debt, P2.15 trillion were liabilities from local creditors while P1.77 trillion were from foreign lenders. The government has adopted the policy of borrowing more locally to minimize foreign exchange risk.

Domestic debt was 0.5-percent lower than the previous month's P2.16 trillion while foreign debt declined 3.5 percent from the previous month's P1.84 trillion.

Domestic borrowings are done either through direct loans or the issuance of government securities such as treasury bills and bonds.

The government's contingent debt as of the end-July hit P575.9 billion, down 2.9 percent from the previous month's P593.4 billion. Contingent debt is the amount of liabilities of government-owned and -controlled corporations and government financial institutions that are guaranteed by the national government.

Cebu ...

From page B1

Manila-Kuala Lumpur service with a seat sale fare of P1,499 one-way, a price cut of almost 90 percent from the current fares for this route. Fare is exclusive of surcharges and government tax.

Malaysia is known for its business and tourist attractions such as its Lake Gardens, Central Market and the Petronas Twin Towers—the world's second tallest building symbolizing Malaysia's astounding economic growth over the last decade.

Kuala Lumpur is Cebu Pacific's fifth regional destination and the seventh new destination opened this year.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY
(Public Estates Authority)
7/F Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St.,
Legaspi Village, 1226 City of Makati
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Website: www.pea.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO REBID

PURCHASE OF SIX (6) MOTOR VEHICLES (06-004)

1. The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), through its corporate budget intends to apply the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) the sum of **Five Million One Hundred Fifty Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,155,000.00)**, inclusive of VAT, to payments under the contract for Six (6) Motor Vehicles. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The PRA now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for One (1) Pick-up Type Vehicle and Five (5) Passenger Wagon Type Vehicles. The delivery of GOODS is required within ten (10) days after issuance of Notice to Proceed (NTP). The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Annex A of the Bid Data Sheet (BDS).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act." Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents starting October 5, 2006 from 8:00AM to 5:00 PM.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased from October 6 to 16, 2006 by interested Bidders from the BAC Secretariat and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand One Hundred Fifty Five Pesos (Php 5,155.00). The method of payment will be cash or check payable to PRA. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The PRA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on October 13, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. at the PRA Conference Room, 8th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the PRA Office on or before October 26, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the BDS. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on October 26, 2006 at 10:15 A.M. at the PRA Conference Room, 8th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
9. Prospective Bidders should have undertaken a project or contract within the last two (2) years with the same kind and contract price, and should have key personnel and services / equipment available for the prosecution of the project.
10. Pursuant to BIR Revenue Regulations 03-2005, all prospective bidders are mandated to file their income and business tax returns electronically using the Electronic Filing and Payment System (EFPS).
11. The PRA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.
12. The PRA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd) **JOSEFINA L. CASTRO**
BAC Chairperson

(PDI – October 6 & 12, 2006)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 11, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	41	41	40	40	1,151,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57.5	57.5	56.5	57	826,900
China Banking Corp.	640	640	635	635	2,720
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.41	1,920,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	66	66	66	66	34,200
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	45	45	42	42	1,500
Philippine National Bank	33	33.5	33	33.5	72,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	41,600
Security Bank Corp.	54	54	53.5	54	141,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	44	44	44	44	1,400
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.65	4.75	4.5	4.7	1,477,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1560	1590	1560	1590	330
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.06	1.14	1.06	1.1	4,063,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1985	1990	1985	1990	380
Ivantage Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	1,015,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	50.5	50.5	50	50.5	215,300
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	51	51.5	51	51.5	176,400
Manila Electric Co. A	22	24.25	22	24	1,455,900
Manila Electric Co. B	31	32	31	32	1,841,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.9	9.1	8.8	9.1	1,536,000
Petron Corp.	4	4.05	4	4.05	881,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1	1	1	290,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	15,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.2	2.2	4,000
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	5	5	4.4	4.5	17,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.75	22.75	22.5	22.5	39,300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	37	37.5	36.5	37	638,600
RFM Corp.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.9	1,400,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.55	3.5	3.55	525,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	66	65	66	109,700
San Miguel Corp. B	75.5	75.5	74	75	487,600
Universal Robina Corp.	19.5	19.75	19.25	19.75	8,156,200
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	5,250,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	2	2.06	2	2.06	1,243,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.7	1.7	50,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	336,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.74	1.76	381,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	4.65	4.65	4.5	4.5	358,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	20,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.6	0.66	0.6	0.66	152,520,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.14	3,000,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	15,000,000
Ayala Corp.	480	482.5	480	482.5	980,220
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.6	745,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	9	9	9	9	3,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	1,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.28	2.38	2.26	2.36	1,612,000
APC Group Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	3,880,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	6,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	600,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	123,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	42,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.36	1.44	1.36	1.42	28,669,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	611,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	800,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	100,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	7	7.3	7	7.2	2,391,000
Keppel Holdings	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	50,000
Medco Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	300,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	10,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.6	1.66	1.58	1.64	15,380,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.185	0.18	0.185	3,930,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	150,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	16,710,000
SM Investments Corp.	248	255	248	255	111,810
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.105	0.11	0.105	0.105	2,900,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	360,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.75	55,786,500
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1,023,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	1.08	1.46	1.08	1.36	6,208,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	50,000
Cebu Holdings, Inc.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	207,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	100,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	15,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	180,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.53	2,250,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,200,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.64	1.68	1.64	1.66	3,451,000
Interport Res. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	3,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	300,000
Fil-Estate Land, Inc.	0.7	0.72	0.69	0.72	2,350,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.88	11,587,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.1	3.15	801,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	520,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	13.25	13.25	13	13.25	322,700
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.4	3,820,000
SM Development Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.4	8.4	10,328,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	220,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18	18	18	18	153,700
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1	1	1	1	210,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Information Capital Tech.	4.95	6.2	4.95	6.1	376,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.42	1.44	7,656,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1100	1100	1070	1080	62,710
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	4,285,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2180	2185	2175	2175	531,580
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.17	0.175	20,280,000
Imperial Res.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,500,000
Ionics Inc.	2.08	2.08	1.98	1.98	200,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	2,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	600,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	29,700,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.7	4	3.7	3.95	121,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	2,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	18.75	19	18.75	19	787,500
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	210,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	4,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5	5	5	5	751,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.96	1.98	1.96	1.98	1,103,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	6,510,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	56,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.98	2	1.96	1.98	1,158,000
Paxys Inc.	12	12.25	12	12.25	705,500
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.2	1,656,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.2	338,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.01	67,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	1,010,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.5	175,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.24	2,790,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	5,360,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	385,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	211,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.01	92,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.55	3.55	6,259,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	97,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.42	0.43	0.39	0.43	3,710,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.6	0.57	0.6	450,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	950,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	7,700,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.2	9.3	9.2	9.2	81,000
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	103	104	103	104	16,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	18.25	18.25	18	18	217,600

CURRENCIES

October 11, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.797830	1.000000	50.0950
Japan	Yen	0.006665	0.008354	0.4185
United Kingdom	Pound	1.479256	1.854100	92.8811
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102379	0.128322	6.4283
Switzerland	Franc	0.628163	0.787340	39.4418
Canada	Dollar	0.704548	0.883080	44.2379
Singapore	Dollar	0.502096	0.629327	31.5261
Australia	Dollar	0.593182	0.743494	37.2453
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.116428	2.652731	132.8886
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.212732	0.266638	13.3572
Brunei	Dollar	0.500521	0.627353	31.4272
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000108	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021304	0.026702	1.3376
UAE	Dirham	0.217303	0.272368	13.6443
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.253400	62.7891
Argentina	Peso	0.256950	0.322061	16.1336
Brazil	Real	0.371602	0.465766	23.3325
Denmark	Kroner	0.134159	0.168155	8.4237
India	Rupee	0.017469	0.021896	1.0969
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216039	0.270783	13.5649
Mexico	New Peso	0.072274	0.090588	4.5380
New Zealand	Dollar	0.525372	0.658501	32.9876
Norway	Kroner	0.119156	0.149350	7.4817
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013155	0.016488	0.8260
South Africa	Rand	0.102092	0.127962	6.4103
Korea	Won	0.000831	0.001042	0.0522
Sweden	Kroner	0.107914	0.135259	6.7758
Syria	Pound	0.015369	0.019264	0.9650
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024122	0.030235	1.5146
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000372	0.000466	0.0233

Government now keen on adopting tax reforms

Proposals considered to help boost capital market

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW READY to adopt recommended tax reforms over the medium term to help boost the country's sluggish capital market, according to the Department of Finance.

"Strengthening our domestic capital market is another key element of our effort to provide viable financing for infrastructure projects," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said in a speech during a joint meeting of the Financial Markets Association, the Money Market Association of the Philippines (MART), and the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) held Tuesday night.

Teves said that the Capital Market Development Council (CMDC) has come up with various recommendations as to how tax neutrality may be attained in the financial sector.

Another finance official said the DOF has agreed that tax neutrality should be observed to help develop the domestic capital market. The specific measures proposed by industry players to achieve tax neutrality, however, is still being studied by the DOF.

Teves said developing the local capital market will help the government attain its goal of making the country less dependent on the foreign credit market for its financing requirements.

"A stronger domestic capital market will help address our need for long-term financing that better matches the implementation schedules of these projects, as well as our preference for peso financing that will better match revenue streams and cushion against market volatility," Teves said.

The proposed tax reforms are contained in the blueprint for capital market development drafted by the CMDC.

The CMDC—composed of representatives from the equities markets, banking and insurance sectors, among others—stressed in the blueprint that taxation for the financial sector should be neutral. "Neutrality" in taxation means that the taxes imposed, or the tax incentives granted, to one subsector should also be given to another.

The group said that currently there is no neutrality in taxation. The current tax environment for the financial sector is more an advantage to the banking sector, and a disadvantage to nonbanking firms such as insurance companies and investment houses.

The CMDC said one way to achieve neutrality in taxation was for investment firms and banks to be covered by the same tax treatment. The group noted that currently, long-term investments in bank products are exempted from the 20-percent final withholding tax. But that same tax is imposed on other financial institutions.

The CMDC also raised the concern among players in the equities market, which they said was heavily taxed. It noted that transaction costs concerning buying and selling of equities are high partly due to heavy taxation. Stock market players are currently levied the stock transaction tax and the value-added tax.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz earlier said that the government has welcomed suggestions concerning reform taxation in the capital market, as its improving fiscal condition will allow it to forego the collection of some taxes for the benefit of boosting activity in the capital market.

He said one such proposal from industry players concerned the lifting of the 20-percent withholding tax on government securities.

Analyst says Banco de Oro a blue chip in the making

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANCO DE ORO UNIVERSAL Bank's expected merger with Equitable PCI Bank over the next 12 months will turn the emerging institution into a blue chip outfit with strong growth prospects, stock brokerage ATR Kim Eng Securities Inc. said.

In a recent research report titled "BDO: Blue Chip in the Making," ATR Kim Eng Securities analyst Ed Bancod said that the growth of retail tycoon Henry Sy's bank should accelerate next year while the fulfillment of its merger with EPCI would "catapult BDO into the big league, improve its trading liquidity and increase the number of shares available to foreign investors."

The analyst said BDO's share price could surge by 25 percent in the next 12 months, supported by an increase in return on equity from 14.1 percent this year to 15.9 percent next year.

Bancod said BDO would likely lead the banking sector with a 23-percent growth in earnings per share next year.

The merger of Banco de Oro and Equitable PCIB will result in a combined market capitalization of approximately $2 billion, Bancod said, putting it on the map of virtually every institutional investor in the Philippines.

He said the SM group would be in a position to merge BDO and EPCIBank by next year, as the group now controls 59.8 percent of the bank and second biggest stockholder Social Security System has pledged to sell its 25.8 percent contingent on the resolution of a court case.

The Supreme Court has yet to decide whether SSS can enter into negotiated deals to sell shares in its investment portfolio.

"If the high court rules otherwise, the SSS may have to put up the shares for auction," Bancod said. "But in our opinion, no other group besides SM would be keen to acquire such a huge block of shares while knowing that somebody else will be calling the shots."

"In any case, we believe the SM group will end up buying the SSS block, thus raising their interest in EPCI to 85.6 percent, well above the 67-percent needed to pursue a merger," he said.

The fact that it is SM and not BDO that is acquiring EPCI means the transaction will not strain BDO's balance sheet, Bancod noted.

SMC to revive $500-M bond offer in 2007

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT SAN Miguel Corp. is set to revive a $500-million hybrid bond offer next year, according to a company source familiar with the deal.

Last April 28, SMC was forced to postpone what was then touted as Asia's maiden hybrid bond offer.

SMC's decision led Moody's Investor Service to withdraw its "(P)Ba3" preferred stock rating for San Miguel Capital Funding Limited (SMCF), a wholly owned subsidiary of SMC. It also withdrew SMC's own "Ba1" indicative foreign currency senior unsecured ratings.

At the same time, the international credit rating firm affirmed its Ba1 corporate family rating with a stable outlook.

"SMC enjoys strong brand equity and commanding positions in most of its markets, which are stable by nature, providing it with a robust and healthy platform for cash flow generation," said Charles Macgregor, Moody's vice president and senior credit officer. "Refinancing risk is, however, an emerging consideration, given the company's ongoing reliance on short-term bank facilities."

The ratings may even go up, with continued growth outside of the Philippines and improved margins in the beverages and food groups.

Proceeds from San Miguel's proposed offer will be used to prepay debts worth roughly $300 million and for general corporate purposes, including capital expenditures and future acquisitions, the company's preliminary prospectus for the offering had indicated.

ABS-CBN unit all set to go global in '08

ABS-CBN GLOBAL, THE INTERNATIONAL revenue driver of television giant ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., is set to go public abroad, company chair Eugenio Lopez III yesterday said during a press luncheon.

ABS-CBN Global will be listed on the Stock Exchange of Singapore in 2008.

ABS-CBN Global, which accounted for roughly 75 percent of the company's revenues in the first half, derives the bulk of its revenues from subscription sales of its cable and direct-to-home service.

ABS-CBN Global will go to the Singapore bourse since it is a more mature market where there are hardly any television stocks listed on the exchange, Lopez said.

"We don't think the market here is strong enough," Lopez said. "We don't think the value of ABS-CBN now reflects its fundamentals."

ABS-CBN is trading at P18 a share yesterday.

Net income this year will be driven by international revenues and the company's cost cutting efforts after it trimmed operating costs last year. But net income for the full year is not expected to be as strong due to weak consumer demand which has also affected advertising spending for most companies, said the company's new chief finance officer Miguel Navarette. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PLDT Q3 profit up due to strong peso

By Riza T. Olchondra

PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE Telephone (PLDT) Co., said yesterday that its third-quarter net income may surpass the second quarter's P6.73 billion, putting it on track to posting "record-breaking" earnings for the year.

"We are benefiting from a strong peso. The foreign exchange loss from the second quarter is reversing to forex gains in the third quarter, so the third quarter reported net income should be better," PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan told reporters on the sidelines of the 5th Management Association of the Philippines International CEO conference.

"It looks better because of forex gains," he said.

PLDT president Napoleon L. Nazareno said in a separate interview that the strong peso has two effects on the company.

It may spur gains because most of its debts are dollar denominated. However, the strong peso also has a dampening effect on revenues because a good portion of the sales are linked to forex rates such as outbound international call.

Nazareno, however, also said he expected that the third quarter would be better than the previous quarter because of foreign exchange gains.

PLDT's net income dropped 7 percent in the first half to P15.3 billion from P16.5 billion in the same period last year.

The company attributed the decline to additional depreciation expenses, foreign exchange losses and a higher statutory tax rate—which were partly mitigated by lower interest expense due to lower net debt balances.

PLDT's consolidated service revenues during the period increased 2 percent to P60.6 billion.

PLDT, Asia's eighth-largest mobile phone operator by subscribers, posted net income of P8.2 billion in the July-September quarter last year, but this may be up for revision with the adoption of new accounting standards.

The firm had outstanding debts of $2.1 billion at the end of 2005, which it wants to cut to $1.7 billion at the end of this year.

The Philippine peso gained about 7 percent against the dollar at the end of September from the end of June. It has gained about 6 percent so far this year, hitting four-year highs early this month.

The company, with a market capitalization of $8.1 billion, is partly owned by Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd. and Japan's NTT group.

Alliance Tuna to conduct maiden offer

ALLIANCE TUNA INTERNATIONAL Inc. hopes to net at least P160 million in fresh funds through its maiden offering in November.

In an offering circular filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange, Alliance Tuna said it would offer 134 million new shares at between P1.20 and P1.60 apiece.

This will raise roughly P160.8 million to P214.4 million in proceeds.

The company has tapped Abacus Capital and Investment Corp. as issue manager and underwriter.

The company plans to list on Nov. 8 and will conduct its offer from October 23 to 30. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Business expert urges regional trade deals

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AN AMERICAN TRADE EXPERT SAID on Wednesday that the Philippines would fare better with Southeast Asian and other regional initiatives than pushing for a free trade arrangement with the United States, which might not get moving until the next decade.

Geza Feketekuty, a professor of commercial diplomacy at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California, said in a briefing yesterday that the United States was currently focused on a possible FTA with Malaysia, which optimists believe could be wrapped up within the year.

"With the fast track authority expiring in 2007, the United States may not go into new talks until after a new president has been elected and until such authority was renewed by Congress," Feketekuty said. "That means 2010 at the earliest."

The law on fast track authority, also known as trade promotion authority, was first passed in 1974 to allow the White House to negotiate agreements on the reduction of foreign tariff and nontariff barriers on American exports of goods and services.

Congress has renewed the fast track law four times, and the law helped clinch the Tokyo Round of the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade-which the World Trade Organization replaced-in 1979; FTAs with Israel and Canada in 1985 and 1989; the North American FTA in 1993 and the Uruguay Round of the GATT in 1994.

The current fast track authority that the Bush administration enjoys will expire in 2007.

Feketekuty also said the Philippines needed to work on some reforms first before it was fit to face the United States in FTA talks.

"These reforms could be aimed at better regulatory transparency, investment climate and protection of intellectual property rights," he said.

"Let's not have negotiations (with the United States) at the moment, but with other countries like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, China and South Korea, go ahead," he said.

Feketekuty, who served with the Office of the US Trade Representative for 21 years, said such regional efforts had been and are being done through a "soft" process and was very probably benefiting Philippine interests.

In August, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said he had asked American officials to "consider some form of phased FTA."

Favila explained that the first phase could mean the removal of tariffs in sectors that were already to do so, like the garments industry.

Subsequent stages might involve time-bound negotiation of FTA concessions for other sectors, beyond which—if parties could not agree on which products would be covered next—earlier concessions can be dismantled.

Still, Favila said the Americans suggested that both parties should first explore other options.

Since 1988, the United States had entered into FTAs with Israel, Canada, North America (Canada and Mexico), Jordan, Chile, Singapore and Australia.

Washington is also in the thick of FTA negotiations with Central American countries, the Southern African Customs Union, the countries in the Andean region, Bahrain, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

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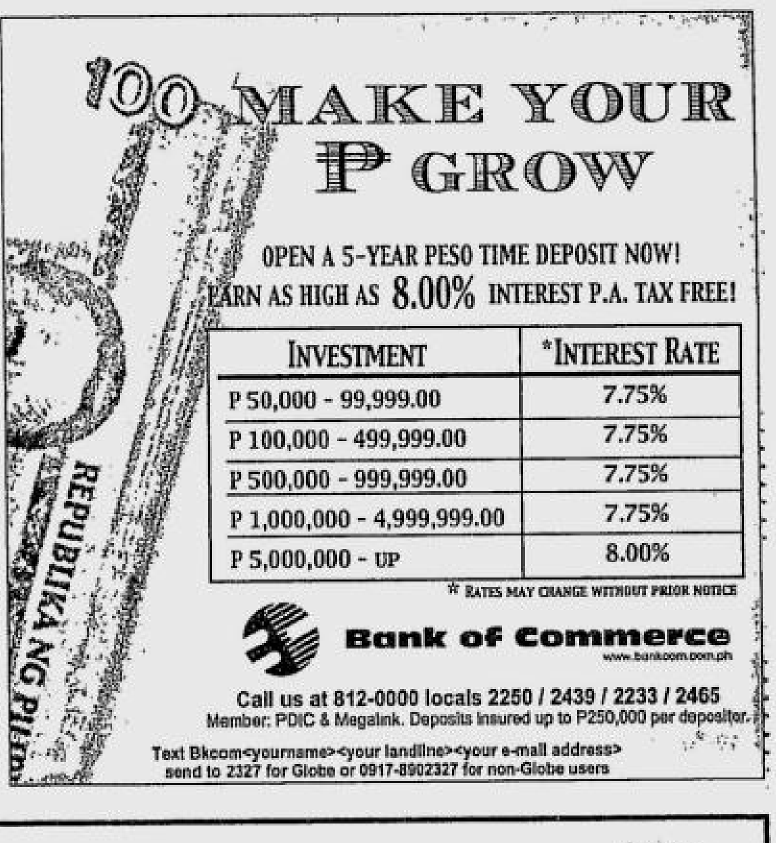

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Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) announces that

A. Applicants for Shari'a Circuit Courts whose names were published in the newspapers on September 27 & 28, 2006, are scheduled to be interviewed on October 17 & 18, 2006, at the Marco Polo Hotel, Davao City, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

B. The following are applicants for different judicial positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): (REGION I) – **AGOO, LA UNION:** (Br. 32) **ALOG**, Loreto Jr. S.; **AQUINO**, Manuel R.; **BALLOGUING**, Maria Bernales; **CALONGE**, Diosdado V.; **CAWED**, Mia Joy Dallares; **CONCEPCION**, Victor O.; **DE VERA**, Grace G., **FANGAYEN**, Robert P.; **MOSUELA**, Reynaldo M.; **PILAR**, Jennifer Albano

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC): (REGION I) – **DAGUPAN CITY, PANGASINAN:** (Br. 1) **ASUNCION**, Damaso Jr. P.; **CABREROS**, Harriet C.; **DALATEN**, Junius F.; **DE VERA**, Grace Gliceria Fernandez; **FERNANDEZ**, Rebecca Andrada; **MARATA**, Gonzalo P. **ORPILLA**, Arleen Rodelas; **PANAHON**, Irma Buenaventura; **PARAYNO**, Maria Laarni Ramos, **SORIANO**, Maria Lourdes Delino, **VALLE**, Aurora Esguerra **SAN CARLOS CITY, PANGASINAN** **ALVAREZ**, Virgilio D.; **DALATEN**, Junius F.; **DE VERA**, Grace Gliceria Fernandez; **FERNANDEZ**, Zarah Sanchez; **GALACGAC**, Marvin A.; **NABUA**, Crisma V.; **PANAHON**, Irma Buenaventura, **PARAYNO**, Maria Laarni Ramos; **VALLE**, Aurora Esguerra **CANDON CITY, ILOCOS SUR:** **CABREROS**, Harriet Cawi; **MABALOT**, Roberto R., **MARTINEZ**, Ray T.; **QUISMORIO**, Modesto Jr. L

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): (REGION I) – **LUNA, LA UNION:** **ARCHOG**, Cecilia Corazon Dulay; **ATILLO**, Romeo Jr. M.; **CABREROS**, Harriet Cawi; **CASIANO**, Edilberta Oriente, **CONCEPCION**, Joselito S.; **FERNANDEZ**, Imelda Picar; **FLORES**, Cristeta Caluza; **MINGUA**, Narciso P.; **ORPILLA**, Arleen Rodelas; **RODRIGUERA**, Nida Quirimit; **SALVE**, Pauline Badol **NAGUILLIAN, LA UNION**: **ARCHOG**, Cecilia Corazon Dulay; **ATILLO**, Romeo Jr. M., **CABREROS**, Harriet Cawi; **CASIANO**, Edilberta Oriente; **FLORES**, Cristeta Caluza; **MABALOT**, Roberto R., **REYES**, Remedios Balderas; **RODRIGUERA**, Nida Quirimit; **SALVE** Pauline Badol **SANTOL, LA UNION**: **ARCHOG**, Cecilia Corazon Dulay; **ATILLIO**, Romeo Jr. M.; **BANEZ**, Mario Anacleto M.; **CONCEPCION**, Joselito S.; **MINGUA**, Narciso P.; **ORDOÑO**, Alan M

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION I) – **BANGUI-PAGUDPUD – ADAMS-DUMALNEG, ILOCOS NORTE**: **ACIDERA**, Ma. Victoria Aguinaldo; **BAUTISTA**, Josephine Gonzales; **GALACGAC**, Marvin A.; **QUIDILLA**, Artemio Jr. H. **PAOAY-CURRIMAO, ILOCOS NORTE**: **ACIDERA**, Ma. Victoria Aguinaldo, **GALACGAC**, Marvin A.; **PINGAO**, Fredelito G.; **QUIDILLA**, Artemio Jr. H. **SARRAT-VINTAR, ILOCOS NORTE**: **ACIDERA**, Ma. Victoria Aguinaldo; **LUCERO**, Rosemarie Ramos; **PINGAO**, Fredelito G.; **QUIDILLA**, Artemio Jr. H.; **SANTOS**, Edgar D.; **TUMANENG**, Gifford Domingo Eusebio L. **TAGUDIN-SUYO, ILOCOS SUR:** **BANEZ**, Mario Anacleto M.; **MINGUA**, Narciso P.; **OPIANA**, Nenita Anungos; **QUISMORIO**, Modesto Jr. L. (REGION III) – **MEXICO-SAN LUIS, PAMPANGA:** **ESGUERRA** Ramil I., **SAMUELA**, Samuel S. (REGION VIII) – **STA. RITA-TALALORA, SAMAR:** **DUQUILLA**, Zacarias E., **PABILONA**, Ma. Luz Lampasa.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants **not later than October 20, 2006** to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Centennial Bldg., P. Faura, Manila (Tel. 552-9512 Fax 552-9598)

All applicants for all judicial positions must submit to the JBC Secretariat ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1, current cellphone and landline numbers, and current residence and e-mail addresses.

October 10, 2006

MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court &
Ex Officio Secretary

(PDI–October 12, 2006)

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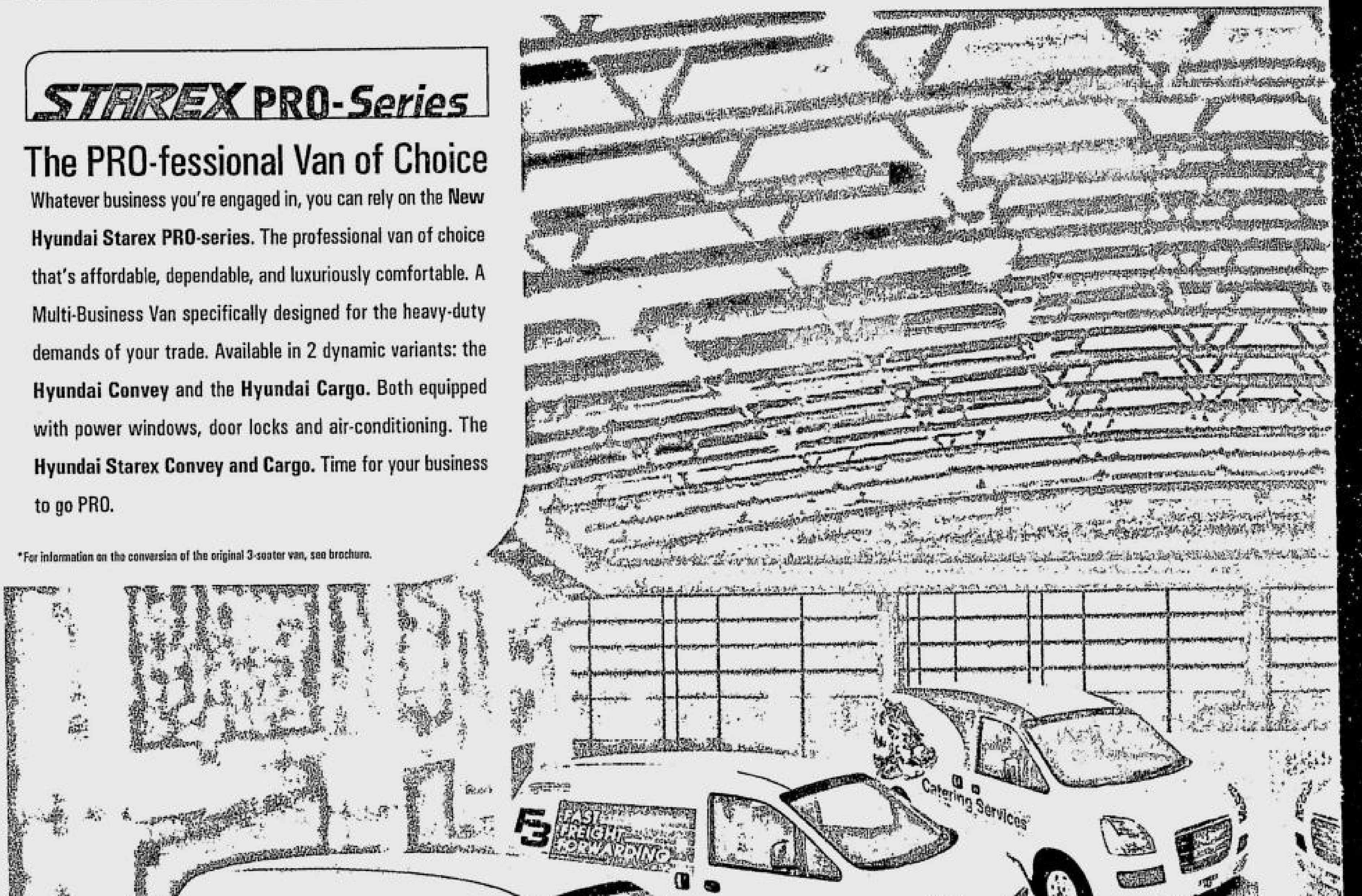

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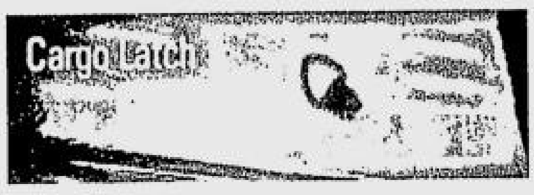
headlamps, allowing quick and safe progress even at the night. Further, there are cargo latches affixed for safer transportation of parcels.

Under the hood, the Starex PRO-series makes great use of its moderately adequate 79PS and more importantly 170Nm of torque, the gearing well-matched to the 2.6 liter diesel engine, giving ample acceleration and good cruising ability on the highway.



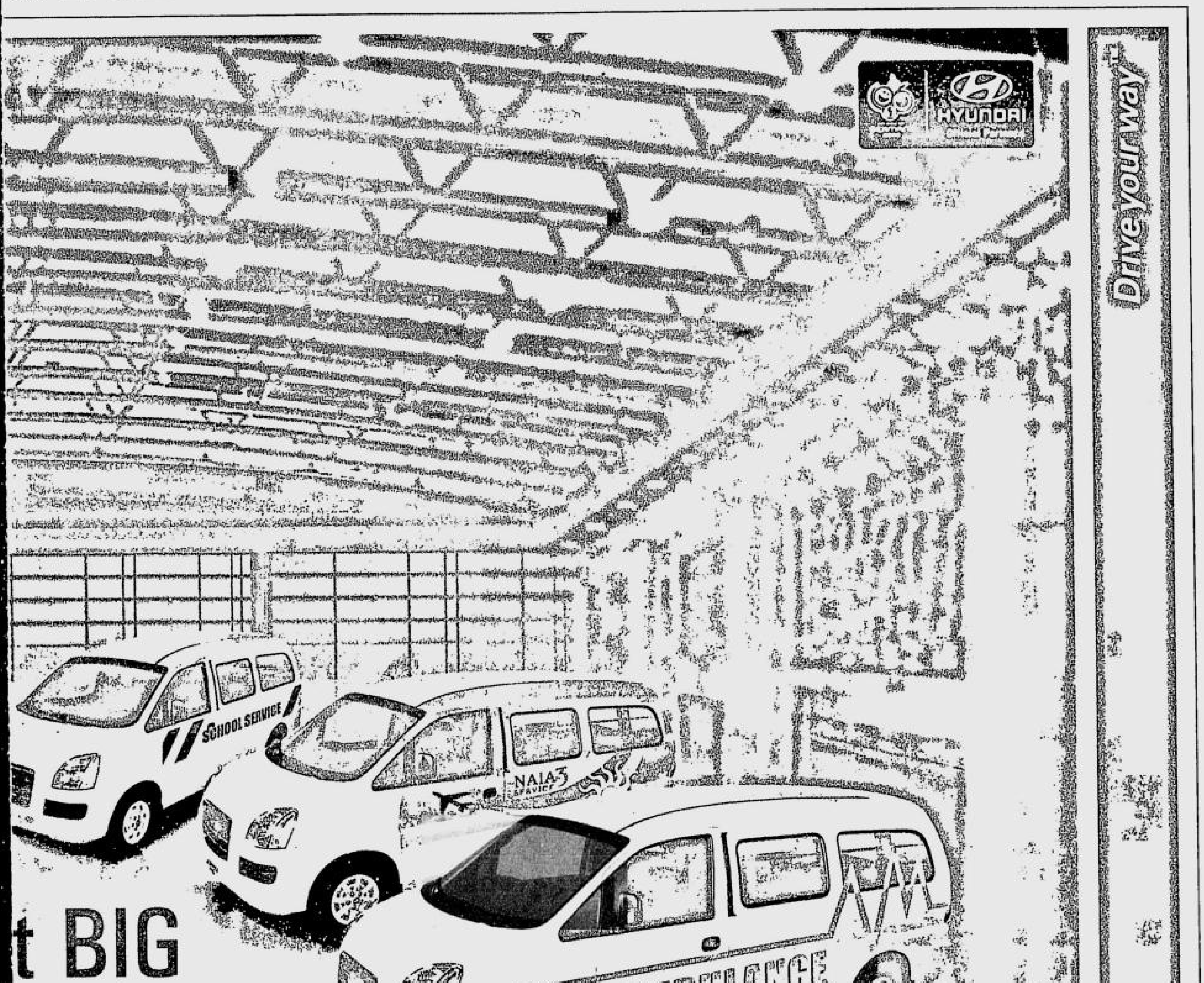
PRO-fitting

Wise entrepreneurs and seasoned businessmen agree that a larger cabin space can equate to more income. Less time and money spent on restocking and resupplying the van will lead to better work efficiency and higher profitability. At dimensions of 5035mm=length, 1820mm=width, 1980mm=height and a 3080mm wheelbase explore the lucrative avenues for the largest van in its category. The rear cargo hold is spacious enough to load up just about anything that your business requires: loads and loads of balikbayan-boxes, very large objects like a shipping pallet, expensive household fixtures, furniture and appliances, fresh, high-value produce and foodstuff. The Starex PRO-Series may be converted as a shuttle service for companies with multiple logistical operations, an airport service, or a deluxe tourist coach to view scenic Philippines. And thanks to the twin rear swing gate, getting people and cargo in and out of the rear isn't a problem. Other usage for this expanded cabin space may include the set up of small fixtures and cabinets. News crew vans and catering services apply this principle just as ambulances for their immediate supplies, hardware and tools.

Twin Rear
Swing Gate Doors
STAREX
PRO

Given the features of the new Starex PRO, it is indispensable as your reliable business partner towards achieving greater business success. The possibilities of its usage in a wide variety of trade and industries are limited only to the imagination.

Comfortably command your world and head to an authorized Hyundai dealer near you to learn more about the new Starex PRO-Series, Cargo and Convey. Now, you can make it big in your business!



Hyundai Advocates PRO Negosyo

As the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) quoted in their presentation for the National SME Agenda, "We have been pushing the economy from the top, but to move the economy faster, we need to push from the base."

This is in relation with the triangular diagram that illustrated how the SMEs or Small and Medium Enterprises comprise the base of the economy. Currently, SMEs cover about 99.6% of all registered firms nationwide. Although they account for only 32% of value in the GDP (Gross Domestic Product), these SMEs generate greater job opportunities amounting to 69.9% of the employment rate in the country.

This clearly justifies how important the SMEs are for our economy. Even the government acknowledges their role in the development of our country. Part of every citizen's responsibility is to help build up the economy, and one way is by supporting these SMEs who struggle persistently in the cutthroat market.

As Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI), the official distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the country, bears itself as a responsible corporate citizen, it rightly grasps that duty to encourage and assist these SMEs who play significant role in the country's development. In a press conference on October 12, 2006, HARI formally introduced one of its efforts for sustainable development, both for the company and for the nation where it operates and serves – the PRO – Negosyo Movement.

PRO-Negosyo is a standpoint that denotes Hyundai and HARI's corporate philosophy and commitment to innovations for humanity. More than bringing quality and innovative automobiles in the country, HARI also intends to transform and improve the quality of life of the people it serves. By supporting the SMEs, HARI is making a significant push for the country's economy to move forward.

As the main proponent of this PRO-Negosyo movement, HARI shall initiate different activities that will hold up its objectives. At the forefront is the new Starex PRO – the new variant of the all-time favorite van that caters to the needs of the entrepreneurs for them to make it big in their business.

Further, HARI shall start a series of mini business fora which will provide a venue to discuss and introduce business options to the Filipino entrepreneur to make it big in their business. The forum will be held at Hyundai dealerships nationwide as a show of support and belief of the whole Hyundai community in the PRO Negosyo Movement. For this project, Hyundai retains no less than the guru of entrepreneurship himself, Dean Alejandrino Ferreria, to assist and inspire them in their rally for Filipino entrepreneurs and for a healthy business environment for the country.

With PRO-Negosyo, HARI also firmly shakes hands with other organizations that support the advocacy for the SMEs. During the Gawad Kaling Expo held last October 7, HARI donated one unit of the Starex PRO to Gawad Kalinga for its Pangkabuhayan projects, particularly in the agribusiness.

This is HARI's modest way of bringing back to the people their support for Hyundai through the years. It echoes Hyundai's goal to be a significant player not just in the automotive industry but also in the development of the whole community.

SA – Tel.: (02) 882-2432 • HYUNDAI E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE. – Tels.: (02) 722-0932 to 34, (02) 722-0936 to 37
SIG – Tels.: (02) 672-3801 to 04 • HYUNDAI QUEZON AVE. – Tel.: (02) 411-2720 • HYUNDAI SHAW BLVD. – Tel.:
HYUNDAI LAOAG – Tels.: (077) 781-8881, 781-8888 • HYUNDAI LA UNION – Tels.. (072) 712-8887 to 89, Mobile
EBU – Tel.: (032) 346-2724 • HYUNDAI ILOILO – Tel.: (033) 320-7022 • HYUNDAI BACOLOD – Tels.: (034) 433-
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HYUNDAI | Genuine Parts

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION

This is to inform the public that UNITED LIBERTY PLACEMENT AGENCY, a sole proprietorship, owned and managed by MS. JEANNETTE NELSON is applying for a POEA License to engage in the business of overseas employment. Its office is located at 4F VIP Building, Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila.

(PDI-Oct. 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
CAMARINES SUR STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur
Telefax No. (054) 477-33-41

NOTICE OF SEARCH & CALL FOR APPLICATION

The Board of Trustees formally and publicly announces that the **Search for the Presidency** of Camarines Sur State Agricultural College is now OPEN.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Filipino citizen;
- Preferably holder of an EARNED doctorate degree in any academic field relevant to the mission and mandate of the College;
- Must have five (5) years relevant managerial and administrative experience;
- Recognized leadership in his/her profession;
- Morally upright and never been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude; and
- Preferably not more than sixty (60) years old at the time of the application.

Documents Required – (Six (6) Copies):

- Letter of intention/application
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae and all supporting documents
- Proposed vision, mission and thrust for the College/University
- Clearances from Police, NBI, Ombudsman, Sandiganbayan and Civil Service Commission
- Full disclosure of all administrative, criminal and/or civil cases filed.

Medical certificate and result of neuro-psychiatric examination shall be asked from the final candidates who will be recommended to the CSSAC Board of Trustees.

Applications are requested to be submitted on or before November 10, 2006 to:

Dr. Patricio S. Faylon
Executive Director
Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development
Los Baños, Laguna

or

Mr. Gilberto D. Aguilar
Board Secretary V
Camarines Sur State Agricultural College
San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Tay Chow Yong	Operations Manager
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Xingri Jin	Assistant General Manager
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Leong Siew Ling	Assistant Manager
VIOLA MUSIC BAR 1810 M. Orosa St., Brgy. 697, Zone 076 Malate, Manila	Si Young Kim	Manager
COLLAGE BEVERLY HILLS-PHILIPPINES, INC. Mindanao Ave., Toro, D2, Quezon City	Kaori Yokoi	Salon System Consultant
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA HOTEL & RESORT, INC. Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Virender Kumar (Chef De Cuisine)	Service Manager-Kitchen
CONVERGYS PHILS. SERVICES CORP. 6796 Ayala Ave., cor. Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Sean Brian Carney	Operations Director
CLIENTLOGIC PHILIPPINES, INC. 22/F, Wynsum Corporate Plaza, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Ctr., San Antonio, Pasig City	Mary D. Larkins	Site Director
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Lina Zhang	Passenger Service Agent
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Fang Yang	Ticket Representative
CLC LUCKY INTERNATIONAL INC. U-314, 3/F, Gateway Centre, Paseo De Magallanes Commercial Center, Makati City	Jaeseong Jeong	Supervisor
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Shuxia Wang	Reservations Assistant
CKLS PLASTIC MFG. CORP. Lot-2 Bldg. 1, Sunriser Industrial Subd., Brgy. Llano, Caloocan City	Feng-Tsun Lu	Consultant
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Xia Li	Reservations Assistant
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Yunhui Luo	Reservations Assistant
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Lixia Chen	Passenger Service Agent
BRITISH GRAND VISION INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. Unit 3303-A, West Tektite Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Lijuan Peng	Reservations Assistant

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI-Oct. 12, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) SECRETARIAT OFFICE
Tel. No. (632) 455-2758 Mobile Phone: (+63) 928 4102732
E-mail: vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Provision of Internet Services for Year 2006

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*, through its 2007 *Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of *P600,000.00* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *the provision of Internet Service for NFA Central Office covering the period January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *Provision of Internet Service for NFA Central Office covering the period January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY-BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 A.M to 5:00 P.M.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00. The method of payment will be *CASH*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on** ***October 19, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the *NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.*

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the *NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City* on November 3, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in either of the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on *November 3, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.* at the *NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *National Food Authority* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity	–	*NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contact Persons	–	*Jose D. Chua / Violeta S. Villarama*
Address	–	*Philsugin Bldg., North Ave., Quezon City*
Telephone / Fax No.	–	*(632) 455-2758*
e-mail address	–	*vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Website	–	*www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI – October 5 & 12, 2006)

U.S. CERTIFICATION SEMINAR
"LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY AGAINST MALPRACTICE SEMINAR FOR NURSES"

REQUIRED BY U.S. FACILITIES
NO PRC LICENSE NEEDED FOR RNs
OCT. 17, 2006 EXECUTIVE PLAZA
HOTEL ERMITA, MANILA
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
P 5,500.00
Seminar Certification Fee with Materials + Lunch

TOPICS: IN-DEPTH U.S. IMMIGRATION LAWS FOR RN's
MALPRACTICE AVOIDANCE
NCLEX LINE-BY-LINE
APPLICATION GUIDE
NCLEX FORMS

Reserve Now. Limited Seats
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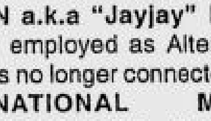
SPEAKER: Atty. Richard M. Chiu
U.S. Licensed Immigration Lawyer
1985 Topnotcher Phil Bar (#1)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



This is to inform the public that **Mr. JOJEAN a.k.a "Jayjay" P. CASTOR**, formerly employed as Alternate Liaison Officer, is no longer connected with **LYKA INTERNATIONAL MANPOWER SERVICES, INC.** effective October 09, 2006. We published this to conform with POEA Rules and Regulations.

(PDI - Oct. 12, 2006)

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: 12 October, 2006
ADB Loan No.: 1772-PHI
Contract No.: SP 10-004-01

1. The Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of the INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RURAL PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT SECTOR (InfRES) PROJECT and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for **Upgrading of San Luis - Siloo Farm to Market Roads** in Malitbog, Bukidnon. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries of the Asian Development Bank that:
   (a) are registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board to undertake infrastructure projects as a Class '**Medium A**' contractor or better, and or a group of at least 2 Medium A contractors operating within a proposed joint venture, and
   (b) have undertaken within the past 5 years, as the contractor, management contractor 3 road construction work projects valued at least Php 10,000,000 for each single Medium A contractor, and within a joint venture agreement.
2. The Municipality of Malitbog ("the Employer") invites sealed bids from bidders with the above qualifications for the construction and completion of the Works, which includes road improvement/upgrading works and providing a gravel overlay of 7.64 kms. Included is the construction and installation of cross-drainage structures, concrete paving of critical portions, concrete lining of roadside canals and guardrails. The Contract period for the works is about 6.5 months (200 Calendar days).
3. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents. at the office of the Employer, at

   Office of the Municipal Mayor
   InfRES Local Project Office
   Municipality of Malitbog
   Province of Bukidnon
   Region X
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 10.000.00. Issuance of Bid Documents will be on October 27, 2006 to November 25, 2006. Pre-Bidding conference will be on November 29, 2006 at 9.00 in the morning at the Municipal Session Hall
5. All Bids must be accompanied by a Security of Two Percent (2%) of the total Bid Price in the form of Cash, Manager's Check or Bank Guarantee or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency, and must be delivered to the above address on or before the closing date on December 11, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. Bids will be opened at 2:00 p.m. on the aforementioned date, in the presence of bidders' representative who choose to attend.
6. The LGU reserves the right to accept or reject any bids or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligations and to cancel the bidding process at any time prior to award of the contractor, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidders of the reasons for Employer's action

(Sgd.) OTHELO S. SUMUGAT
Chairperson, Bids & Awards Committee (BAC)

(PDI--Aug. 12 & 19, 2006)

Call Center industry holds first Idol Search

THE TV SHOW THAT introduced us to Simon Cowell's acerbic tongue spewing quotable quotes such as "If this were a paid concert, this is the point I'd leave" (And would you believe that was one where he actually made an effort to soften the blow?), Paula Abdul's seal-like clapping, Randy Jackson's unrelenting campaign for the word "dawg" to be an official word, Kelly Clarkson's remarkable singing talent, William Hung's, er, lack thereof and Constantine Maroulis' own take on the "make love to the camera" rule while performing. (which hopefully we've seen the end of), recently launched its local version on ABC-5 to much success.

Now, the Human Resources Contact Center Forum, in cooperation with Thinking Cap, will put its own spin to the famous TV show via "Contact Center Idol" where representatives from the various contact centers in the country will vie for the prestigious title. Contact centers taking part in this event are ACS, AIG, Ambergris Solutions, Cyber City, Dell, Global 9, HSBC, HTMT, People-Support, Qinteraction, Sutherland, Sykes Asia, Teleperformance and TeleTech.

The finals will be held at the Philamlife Auditorium along United Nations Ave. on Oct. 14 at 7pm. Tickets for this special event are reasonably priced at P50, and may be bought at the gate. For more details, please call Thinking Cap, Inc. at 8149568 or 0920-9135596 (look for Joyce Peñalosa).

This event is supported by Philamlife Foundation, PDI-Job Market, World Pacific, Mirof, Nexus, Human Capital Asia, and VJ Graphics.

Roberto A. Angeles

June 9, 1917 to October 11, 2006

Hinihiling ng kanyang pamilya, si *Maria Martha* at *Angelito* at *Marilyn*, *Mayeth*, *Junjun* at *Mylene* na mag-alay ang mga kaibigan at mambabasa ng mga panalangin para sa kapayapaan ng kaniyang kaluluwa.

Ang kaniyang mga labi mananatili sa Santuario de San Jose Mortuary, East Greenhills hanggang ika-15 ng Oktubre, 2006.

"Even when I walk through a dark valley,
I feel no harm. For you are at my side,
your rod and staff give me courage..."

Psalm 23:4

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Our Dearest Ima

EVANGELINE JAIME MANLAPAZ

*Peacefully joined Our Creator, and her soul mate, loving husband **Vicente Cortez Manlapaz**, on 4 October 2006 at the age of 73.*

Her Mother **Anselma**, her Children **Joyce** & **George**, **Grace**, **Luz**, **Portia** & **Sam**, **JV** & **Liza**, **Gloria** & **Rey**, **Lalaine** & **Mike**, **Ruby** & **Jude**, **Perla** & **Mark**, **Rosalie** & **Philip**, **Jun** & **Tet**, and **Van**, together with her 21 loving grandchildren, request relatives, friends and pious readers to please pray for the eternal rest and peace of her soul.

Her ashes will arrive on October 14, 2006, Memorial services will be at the Capilla de la Virgen, Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. There will be masses on October 14 and 15, both at 5:00 p.m. and on October 16 at 10:30 a.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given to the public that **Mr. EDWIN G. OLIVA**, whose picture appears above, is no longer connected with **Quality Products & Services, Inc. (QUALIPROSE)** effective September 1, 2006.

Any transaction entered into by the said **Mr. EDWIN G. OLIVA** effective September 1, 2006 shall not be honored by **QUALIPROSE**. He is likewise not authorized to represent **QUALIPROSE** in any capacity as of the said date.

The Law Firm of
CONTACTO NIEVALES & Associates
11th Floor, MARC 2000 Tower
1973 Taft Avenue, Malate, Manila

for:

QUALITY PRODUCTS & SERVICES, INC. (QUALIPROSE)
Km. 23 West Service Road Bldg. 6, Sunblest Compound
Cupang, Muntinlupa City

(PDI--Oct. 12, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

WILLYJARDO D. CATALAN

JANELLE PINON

JOYGIN GONZALES

Please take notice that effective 18 September 2006 **WILLYJARDO D. CATALAN, JANELLE PINON** and **JOYGIN GONZALES** are no longer connected with **ACTIVE GEAR UNLIMITED INC.** All orders, solicitations deliveries, purchases or any transactions in anyway connected with **ACTIVE GEAR UNLIMITED INC.** shall no longer be honored after 18 September 2006.

(PDI--Oct. 12, 2006)

Our Dearly Beloved Mommy

MARINA REYES ANTONIO

Peacefully joined her Creator
on October 10, 2006, at the age of 96.

Widow of the late
NATIONAL ARTIST FOR ARCHITECTURE
PABLO S. ANTONIO

Her bereaved children: **Ma. Lourdes** & **Jose Veloso** (†), **Pablo Jr.** & **Remedios**, **Antonio Victor** (†) & **Mirja**, **Luis**, **Ramon**, **Francis Joseph** & **Marie Grace** and **Annette**; her sister, **Adelina Reyes Cruz** and brother **Francisco** & **Mary Reyes**; grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives, request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla Del Señor, Santuario De San Antonio, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 14, 2006 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Santuario De San Antonio.

CLASSIFIEDS

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL BROADCAST STAFF-RTVM
MALACAÑANG, MANILA

BID BULLETIN #3

Notice is hereby given to all prospective bidders for the project "Integration Services and Rental of Audio, Lighting & Audio Visual Equipment including detailed engineering, plans & design, aesthetics, installation & operation at the Shangri-la Mactan Island & Resort Hotel, Portofino Structural Tents, Cebu International Convention Center & Gala Night for the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu", Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid of which, was advertised last Sept. 30 & October 8, 2006, is now amended to:

"Integration Services and Rental of Audio, Lighting & Audio Visual Equipment including detailed engineering, plans & design, aesthetics, installation & operation at the Shangri-la Mactan Island & Resort Hotel, Portofino Structural Tents and Cebu International Convention Center for the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu".

Issued this 10th of October, 2006.

(Sgd.) **Melba B. Aligaen**
BAC Chairman

(PDI--Oct. 12, 2006)

More Classified Ads:

Public Estates Authority *B2*
Supreme Court of the Philippines *B3*

BUSINESS

Funds for competitiveness council pledged

Major business groups join hands to push action agenda

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST BUSINESS groups have pledged to raise funds for the newly formed National Competitiveness Council, which is part of the national action agenda to make it easier for firms to operate here.

According to the Philippine Exporters Confederation, 14 business federations and chambers had also volunteered resources for specific programs covered in the agenda approved during the National Competitiveness Summit held last week.

These groups include the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop), Philippine Retailers Association, Management Association of the Philippines, Philippines Inc., Federation of Philippine Industries, Philippine Franchise Association, Philippine Automotive Federation, Personnel Management Association of the Philippines and Semiconductors and Electronic Industries of the Philippines.

Philexport said the groups formalized their pledge through a "covenant of support," under which they were committed to provide logistical resources aimed at activating and helping sustain an agenda that consists of "quick wins and strategic recommendations in a short-, medium- and long-term timeline."

Organized last Oct. 6, the council is expected to push the agenda on competitiveness that task groups on six major sources of competitive advantages had prepared.

As part of their commitment on a program to build a pool of competitive Filipino workers and professionals, the council members had promised to expand the Manggagawang Pinoy training program that Ecop started.

"The covenant was a rare display of unity in a business community that has had a long history of rivalry not only because of business competition, but in divergent views on economic and other issues of national import," Philexport said.

Aside from raising funds for the program, the groups had also pledged to work with their counterparts in government on specific programs and projects aimed at priority issues, such as financing small and medium-scale firms; building pivotal infrastructure; addressing the deteriorating quality of education and manpower training; red tape and corruption in government; concerns on high power rates and future energy supply; and corporate and public service governance.

Last week's summit was held in the wake of a series of reports from international institutions, which indicated the country's weak ratings as an investment location.

One of these reports was the International Finance Corp. and the World Bank's study titled "Doing Business 2007," which showed that the Philippines ranked 126th out of 175 economies worldwide.

Move up value chain, call centers urged

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE GLOBAL BUSINESS PROCESS OUTsourcing (BPO) industry is now worth at least $12.5 billion and will grow between 10 and 15 percent a year, according to the head of an international contact center firm.

To maintain or increase its share of this pie, the Philippines must make extra effort to improve the quality of its BPO services, to enable locally based firms to provide more value-added services that also pay more, Convergys Corp. president David F. Dougherty said.

"It would be extremely wise for [the country] to move up the value chain beyond mere contact center operations," he said during a briefing yesterday.

Dougherty visited the country to inaugurate the firm's newest site at its low-rise building along Ayala Ave. called Convergys One.

"You'll need to go into real BPO operations which will require an increased complexity of skills," he said.

Critics of the local call center industry have long pointed out that it provides only low value-added services, which can easily be replicated in other countries, especially since the quality of English education in the Philippines has declined significantly in recent years.

Nonetheless, Dougherty noted that the Philippines will continue to profit from the present call center business model, which relies heavily on client-operator interaction over telephones—a scheme which allows Filipinos to leverage their relative superiority in the English language.

Despite employing close to 120,000 call center agents as of the latest count—one of the fastest growing job markets in the country—the local BPO scene remains a small player in the global market.

Convergys client business director Jose Mari P. Mercado estimated that the Philippines captured only $1.2 billion or roughly 10 percent of the global business last year.

"India, in comparison, made about $4 billion last year," he said.

Despite these issues, Dougherty said the company planned to expand its local operations to meet growing demand from US-based clients, although he declined to reveal exact figures.

Convergys currently operates seven contact center sites, employing approximately 9,500 personnel, the majority of which are call center agents.

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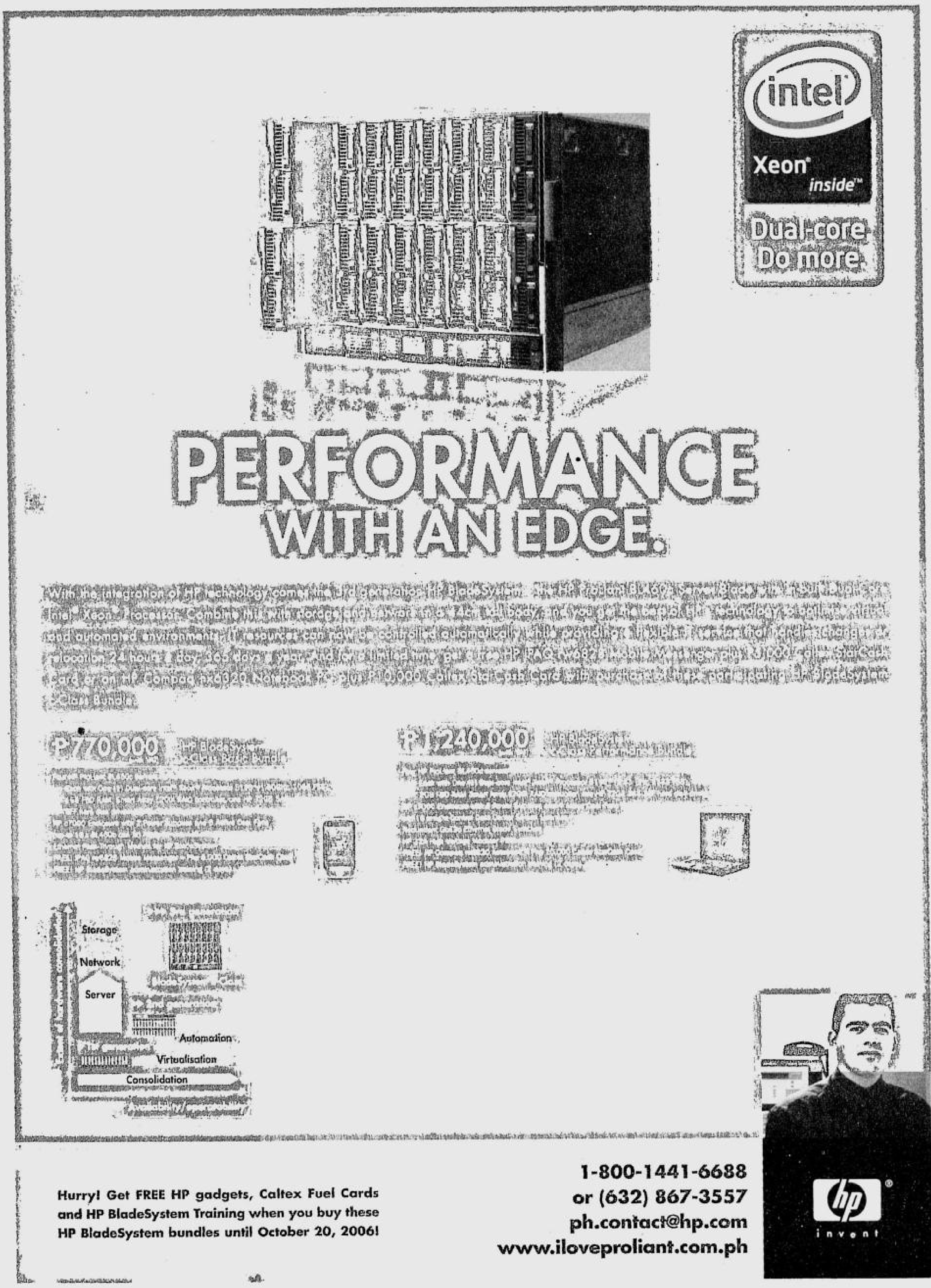

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The HP Contact Center is available Mondays thru Fridays

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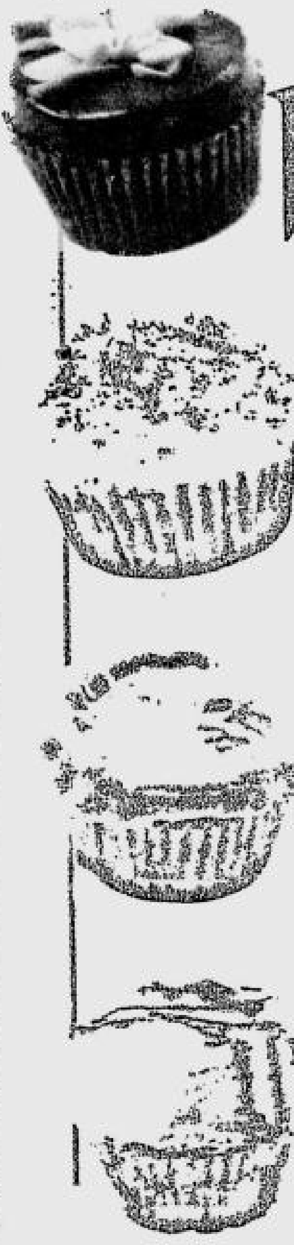
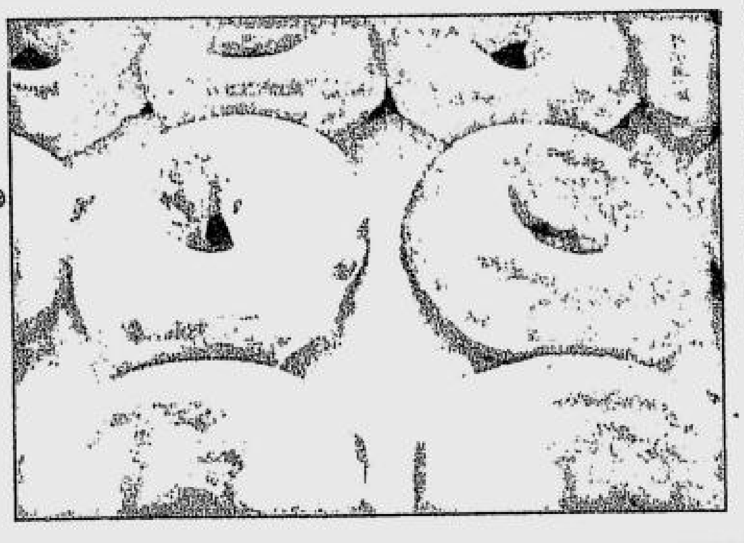
LIFESTYLE
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) **or email us at** lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

WEDNESDAY **2BU** THURSDAY **FOOD** FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

Batter banter





SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE of these:

Hail holes

What: Doughnuts à la Krispy Kreme

Why: Pinoys are tired of having to hand-carry Krispy Kremes all the way from San Francisco or Hong Kong or Singapore as *pasalubong* for donut-crazy family and friends, none of whom are cops on duty.

Who: Same people behind Max's Restaurant are taking care of the nuts and bolts of running the Krispy Kreme franchise in the country.

Where: Krispy Kreme No. 1 will open at City Center, The Fort, Taguig City; 29 others will open in the next five years at various points of gravitation.

When: The first Krispy Kreme shop is set to open Nov. 16.

Cakes by the cup

What: Cupcakes by Sonja

Why: If Carrie Bradshaw and her "Sex and the City" gang could have their cupcakes and eat them, too, so can we in these islands where Magnolia is also an ice cream.

Who: Sonia Ocampo, who managed to swing a stint at Magnolia Bakery in Manhattan's West Village, is baking and frosting these adorable confections.

Where: Cupcakes by Sonja will be opening at Serendra in Fort Bonifacio.

When: Soon, but not soon enough.

Daily bread recipes

WHO SAYS SANDWICHES MAKE BLAND meals? Try these exciting and deliciously filling bites from San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center. More great recipes are a few clicks away, if you log on to www.mygreatfood.com.

Tomato Tinapa Cheese Toast

1 pc mini baguette, sliced in half
1 tbsp Star Mantekeso
3 pc tomatoes, sliced
2 tbsp *tinapa*, flaked
2 tbsp Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese, grated
1 tsp parsley, chopped

On each half slice of the baguette, spread Star Mantekeso, then top with the tomato slices, flaked *tinapa*, and grated Magnolia Quickmelt cheese. Place inside a preheated oven toaster. Allow the Quickmelt cheese to brown slightly. This will take about 5-7 minutes (on medium heat setting). When done, remove from oven toaster and top with the chopped parsley. Serves one.

Bananarama

(on sandwich maker)

2 pc sliced loaf bread
1 pc medium-size ripe banana
1 tbsp Star Margarine Sweet Blend
1/8 tsp cinnamon powder

Place the banana, Star Sweet Blend and cinnamon powder in a bowl and mash together. Make sure all ingredients are mixed well. Spread mixture onto a slice of bread and top with the other slice. Place sandwich onto sandwich maker and cook/toast until done (light on sandwich maker will automatically shut off when done).

Serves one.

Crispy Crab Buns

½ c Purefoods Baron all-purpose flour
1 pc egg, beaten
1 c Japanese bread crumbs
2 pc crabsticks (*kani*)
onions, sliced into rings
4 c/1 L Magnolia Nutri-oil palm oil
2 tbsp Magnolia Cheezee Spread
1 pc hotdog bun
1 pc lettuce leaves

Heat the oil in a deep fryer (160-170°C). Meanwhile, place the flour, beaten eggs and Japanese bread crumbs in three separate containers. Dredge the crabsticks in flour, beaten egg and finally into the bread crumbs. Deep fry the crabsticks in the heated oil until golden in color. When done, place crabsticks on a plate with paper towels to drain off excess oil. Do the same procedure with the onion rings. Spread Magnolia Cheezee on the hotdog bun (you may toast the bun for a few minutes if you wish) and place the fried crabsticks, fried onions and lettuce leaf onto the bun.

Serves one.

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Simply the best from top Pinoy chefs

CHEFS with attitude, and a book to go with it: (back row) Roy Ng, Bricks Nemenzo and Ed Tuazon; (front) Paul Russel Gill, Norbert Gandler, Dietmar Dietrich and Toby Libarnes

ANNUALLY, CULINARY COMPETITIONS ARE held all over the country where people from the profession are asked to be judges. The Bad Boys of Cagayan, as they are fondly called, have been judging cooking competitions in Cagayan de Oro. This year, they decided to pay homage to the Cagayan de Oro Hotel and Restaurant Association by coming out with a delightful compilation of recipes in a book called "Simply the Best," a collection of recipes by renowned chefs in the Philippines.

If you are in search of a recipe book that comes complete with all the ingredients, then this is the one for you—148 pages of recipes in full color and so well written that each recipe includes *mise en place*, preparation techniques, chefs' tips, pointers and advice for success.

The book offers an international repertoire of dishes that range from appetizers to desserts, with entries to delight comfort-food enthusiasts, as well as discriminating palates: Baked Tomato Tart, Coffee Ribs, Hainanese Chicken, Pinasingawang Malasugue, Chili Crabs, Cashew Nut-crusted Ostrich Curry, Warm Chocolate Truffle Cake, Trilogy of Calinan Durian Dessert... the list goes on and on!

At P550, this book is value for money at its finest! Sorry, but it is not available in bookstores and there are only limited copies. Call these numbers: Manila—9268888, 9201481; Cebu—0927-2773471; Davao—0918-9671279; CDO—0919-5872812, 0917-7063150.

60 years of baking

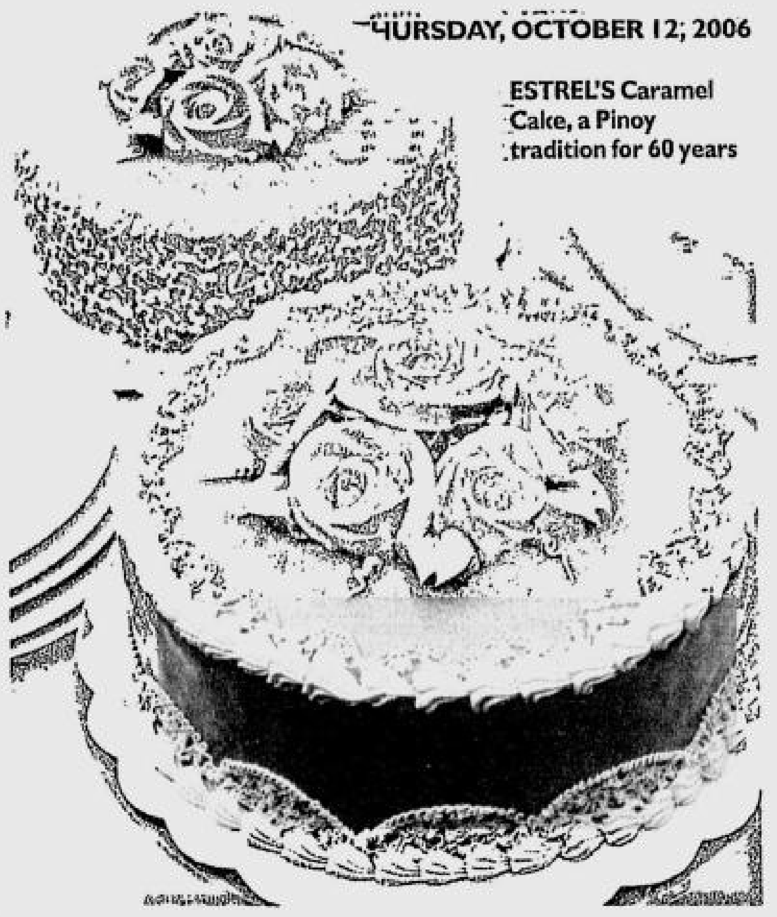
Who will ever forget caramel cakes? I won't, I grew up with them. My most vivid memories are of cakes laden with large, rich butter cream roses. It's a luxury that I have managed to sustain for 38 years. And Estrel's had already been in the business for over two decades before I was born.

They are now celebrating their 60th year and even today their caramel cakes still taste like those my *lola* served many years ago. To Estrel's, congratulations and may we be fortunate enough to enjoy your cakes for another 60 years!

Estrel's is at 54 Scout Tobias St., QC, tel. 3722965.

'Sorbetes' at its finest

Fruity coco is all about committing the sin without the guilt! Delicious virgin coconut oil (VCO) ice cream that is creamy yet non-dairy, low in sugar, contains no trans-fatty acids. Indeed, the healthy alternative! Soon there will be more flavors to choose from, of course, all with a VCO base. Call or text 0917-8966581.



ESTREL'S Caramel Cake, a Pinoy tradition for 60 years

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

LEMON Meringue Tart from the book "Simply the Best"

Citra Mina

Few things make me as happy as seeing Pinoy-owned food manufacturers and retailers do well. Citra Mina, the tuna company from General Santos City, is a perfect example. Not only does it provide us with excellent tuna, but it has recently taken its operations to new heights by manufacturing garlic *longanisa*, hot dogs, burgers, *siomai*, ham, *tocino*, nuggets, all made of tuna. Call 7258018, 5415852.

Davao discoveries

I was in Davao over the weekend for the Mindanao Culinary Festival and here are a couple of interesting things:

Pineapple—Last year, I wrote about a pineapple that tasted like piña colada. With every bite of pineapple comes hints of coconut. This variety is so sweet and, in spite of its juiciness, this one manages to stay crunchy.

Until about three months ago, I ordered them from Davao. The good news is now they are available in Metro Manila: J&C Fruits, Stall 18, Market! Market! The pineapples are sold as J&C Solana. For these wonderful pineapples, I have my good old friend Anton Lagdameo to thank for growing them!

Mer's Tuba Bibingka—Not like the usual *galapong*, this one has a unique flavor and texture, all of its own. When in Davao, call 082-5532368.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph.

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OCTOBER - NOVEMBER SCHEDULE
RECREATIONAL AND ONE-DAY BUSINESS CLASS

BAKING CLASSES

October 23, Monday - THE QUICHE CLASS. Pastry Chef - Instructor, Chef Hannah Herrera will be demonstrating classic pastry dough making in this Quiche Class. The recipes are Quiche Lorraine, Brie and Chive Quiche, Caramelized Onion and Feta Quiche, Roasted Bell Pepper Quiche and Smoked Salmon Quiche for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

November 08, Wednesday - COOKIE ART 1. Cookie decorating like you've never known before. Learn how to make gorgeous, original design cookies for all occasions using cookie cutters, stencils and different kinds of icings. Whether you are a budding artist just waiting to let your creative juices flow or someone who loves to bake and wants to get original, this class is for you. Recipes are Roll-out Butter Cookies, Roll-out Chocolate Cookies, Gingerbread Cookies, Royal Icing, Meringue Powder Royal Icing and Quick Pour Cookie Icing. Cookie Art will be demonstrated by Chef Pam Sta Ana of Pam's Kitchen Including all ingredients from 10:00 - 4.00 p.m. for P1,500.00 NEW CLASS.

November 09, Thursday - CHOCOLATE TEMPTATIONS. This class is a must for anyone with a passion to create a dazzling chocolate desserts. Chef Adoree Chong-Uy will demonstrate a variety of specialties like Double Chocolate Rum Cake, Fudgy Chocolate Cake, Chocolate Blitz Torte, Flourless Chocolate Cake, Chocolate Peanut Butter Dome and Graham Chocolate Roulade for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 - 4.00 p.n

COOKING CLASSES

October 12, Thursday - NOCHE BUENA FEAST. Chef Gino will teach you tasty and delicious holiday dishes served during Noche Buena and other special occasions. Recipes include Lengua con Cetas, Roast Rib-eye with Onion Gravy, Spanish Style Roast Turkey, Cannelloni and Prawns Thermidor for P1,800.00 from 11:00 - 4:00 p.m. including all ingredients

October 13, Friday - SIMPLE SUSHI & SASHIMI WORKSHOP I This Sushi and Sashimi Workshop of Chef Aoki from Osaka, Japan where the student will learn simple and basic sushi and sashimi making that you can do and serve to your family and friends. Trimming of Tuna, Sushi Rice, California Maki, Tekka Maki, Temaki, Kanikyuri Sarada and Miso Soup are the recipes that he will be teaching. P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m

October 15, Sunday - THAI BARBECUE I. Different kinds of genuine Thai Barbecue with sauces and side dish from Chef Chariya like Chicken Barbecue, Grilled Catfish, Grilled Pork Belly, Grilled Pork Spareribs with Different Kinds of Sauces and Papaya Salad for P1,500.00 including all the ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m.

October 16, Monday - THE ART OF FRIED AND APPETIZER, JAPANESE STYLE. Easy to follow recipe from Chef Rikichi Aoki that you can serve to your friends and family; the recipes are Tempura Ebi, Moriawase, Tempura Kakiage, Agedashi Tofu and Gyoza Yasai Itame for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m.

October 18, Wednesday - HOMEMADE HOLIDAY GIFTS 1. Chef Gino will teach bottled goodies that are perfect for Christmas give-aways. Recipes include Puttanesca, Salsa, Nacho Cheese Dip, Cilantro Pesto, Classic Pesto, Salad Dressing, Toblerone Fondue and many more. Gift wrapping ideas included for P1,500.00 including ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m.

October 19, Thursday - HOMEMADE HOLIDAY GIFTS 2. Once again Chef Gino will teach another set of bottled goodies that are perfect for Christmas giveaways. Recipes include Violet Crumble, Boursin, Butter Caramel Sauce, Homemade Whole Grain Mustard, Nougat, Dried Tomatoes in Oil and Cheese Log for P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 pm.

October 20, Friday - CHINESE BANQUET AT HOME. Anyone who has enjoyed the pleasures of a Chinese Banquet meal has inevitably wondered what it would be like to create these delicacies at home. The answer, surprisingly is that most are quite easy to make. Chef Jenny Tan will be demonstrating recipes such as Jelly Fish and Chicken Salad, Winter Melon and Ham Soup, Cantonese Style Steamed Fish, Stir-Fried Scallops with Chinese Broccoli Leaves, Minced Chicken in Lettuce Cups, Stewed Pork Spareribs with Chinese Buns, Yang Chao Fried Rice and Almond Lychee. Including all ingredients for P1,500.00 from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

October 22, Sunday - HOLIDAY FIESTA FEASTS. Dishes most commonly served during Fiestas and other occasions. Let Chef Lawrence Zafra demonstrate to us these dishes. Recipes are Beef Caldereta, Traditional Kare-kare, Dinuguan, Tilapia Picadillo, Pininyahang Manok, Guinataang Gabi at Hipo and Biko for P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 - 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS

October 24, Tuesday - SUMPTUOUS SALMON I. Let Chef Gino teach you 6 unique and tasty ways to cook Salmon that can be used in catering or for entertaining. Recipes include Salmon Cannelloni, Salmon Croquettes with Dill-Mustard Sauce, Herb Crusted Salmon Fillet with Caper Buerre Blanc, Spinach Salmon Lasagna with Saffron Gratin, Salmon Mousse with Fish Roe in Horseradish Sauce and Poached Salmon Paupiette with Lemon-Basil Whisk Butter Sauce for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m

October 25, Wednesday - SIMPLE INDOOR BBQ IDEAS. Simple barbecue ideas from Chef Toto Erfe of Café Ysabel kitchen will be demonstrated. The recipes are 5-Spice Pork Ribs, Provolone Beef Burgers with Bloody Mary Sauce, Lemongrass & Kaffir Pork Chops with Chili-Lime Sauce, Curried Chicken BBQ with Tamarind Glaze, Blackened Fish Fillet with Red Onion and Pepper Salsa & Stuffed Sausage Kebabs The recipes include all ingredients for P1,500.00 from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

October 26, Thursday - SUMPTUOUS SALMON 2. Let Chef Gino teach you 6 unique and tasty ways to cooking Salmon that can be used in catering or for simple entertaining. Recipes include Salmon Head Red Curry with Coconut Milk, Salmon Teriyaki with Wasabi Mayonnaise, Salmon Meuniere with Kani Sarada Gratin, Salmon Cheesecake, Coulibiac of Salmon, Smoked Salmon with Shrimp Dumpling for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m.

October 27, Friday - EASY TO DO APPETIZERS I. Baked Clams Casino, Salmon Carpaccio, Buffalo Chicken Wings with Bleu Cheese Sauce, Sambal Squid and Crispy Beef Ribs in Spiced Salt are the simple recipes of Chef Toto Erfe will be teaching us. Recipes include all ingredients for P1,500.00 from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m

November 07, Tuesday - GIFTS FROM THE KITCHEN. Chef Gene prepares an array of Holiday gifts your friends will appreciate and that are easy to prepare even in the shortest possible time. Classic favourites such as Vela de Lomo, Gourmet Tuyo, Grilled White Cheese, Aceitunas Aliñadas, Dulong in Olive oil and Mufuletta. P1,500.00 from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m Recipes include all ingredients

November 10, Friday - DIMSUM AND DUMPLINGS. Now, you can enjoy Chinese snacks freshly made and served steaming hot on your own dining table. Chef Jenny Tan of will demonstrate Pork Siomai, Steamed Spareribs, Beef balls on Bean Curd Sheets, Deep-Fried Shrimp Toast, Springrolls, Ho-Fan (Shrimp, Roasted Pork and Chinese Sausage) and Assorted Dipping Sauces. P1,500.00 from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m. including all ingredients. NEW CLASS.

November 14, Tuesday - SOME OF MY FAVORITE RECIPES. We all have our favorite recipes we enjoy cooking and preparing for our family and friends. Let Chef Betina teach us some of her favorite recipes. The recipes are Clam and Sweet Potato Soup for Thanks Giving, Delicious Squash Flowers with Mysterious Filling and Honey-Hoisin Dip "A Best Seller" Shrimp and Avocado Salad Fit for a King, My Favorite Spaghetti with Meatballs (Spanish Style) "My Mom's Secret Recipes" Crusted Fillet of Fish with Betina's Yummy-Special Tartar Sauce and Onion Relish on the side and My Lola's Adobo to Die For Including all ingredients for P1,800.00 from 10:00 - 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS

OTHER CLASSES OFFERING

October 12 & 23 - 25, Thursday & Monday - Wednesday - BASIC WINE APPRECIATION. Basic no nonsense approach to wine appreciation. Chef Gene will guide you thru the tasting of over 25 wines. Learn to pair wine with food and unlock the joys of wine appreciation. P6,000.00 per person. NEW CLASS.

Schedule: October 12, Thursday - Basic Wine Lecture - 5 pm
October 23, Monday - Wine Sensory - 10 am
- Wine Seminar, Day 1 - 2 pm
October 24, Tuesday - Wine Seminar, Day 2 - 2 pm
October 25, Wednesday - Wine Seminar, Day 3 - 2 pm

November 03 - 04, Friday & Saturday - SIMPLE & PRACTICAL WAYS FOR EFFECTIVE FOOD COSTING & BAKER'S MATH. Know and understand basic principles in food costing, professionalize your home-based business and gain additional knowledge for effective food costing for current restaurant owners / operators. Includes lecture, exercises and exam for food and beverage costing and bakers percent with lunch and snacks for P3,500.00 for 2 days from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. NEW CLASS

WE WOULD APPRECIATE IF YOU COULD CALL AT LEAST TWO DAYS BEFORE THE CLASS FOR RESERVATION.

DIPLOMA IN PROFESSIONAL CULINARY ARTS PROGRAM

The Professional Culinary Arts Program prepares students for professional entry into the food service industry. This intensive program integrates classical and modern culinary techniques from the finest institutions abroad with kitchen management skills. Students learn how to prepare soups, sauces, vegetables, entrees, breads, pastries and desserts. They will learn how to identify, fabricate and portion meat, poultry, fish and shellfish. The course will also provide the introductory skills on Asian and Halal cooking, wine appreciation, gastronomy, table service and back of the house operations.

HIGHEST TESDA ACCREDITED PROGRAM. This program is a hands-on training series for students to gain proficiency in various skills needed to perform at professional standards in a commercial kitchen. The students will also prepare buffets and be involved in actual functions.

Learn the CACS method and be the Global Chef! Our program is the only school with its own restaurant outlet and its own internship program of 400 hours and Externship or an outside practicum program of 300 hours. It is also the only program with the mostly widely used software hospitality system worldwide that gives its graduates the global edge. Enrollment includes 3 sets of uniforms, chef's kit, manual and all the ingredients to be used. NO HIDDEN COSTS!

Classes will start October, TTHS Schedule for 10:00 - 4:00 pm or 5:00 - 11:00 pm. Enrollment is ongoing. For inquiries and reservations, call 726-9326 or 725-5089 and look for Marilyn, Zac or Glady.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN COOKING AND BAKING SKILLS

Lessons cover all areas of basic kitchen skills, meat, fish, poultry and seafood fabrication, vegetables, pasta and other starch accompaniments and internationally accepted standards for baking. Menu planning and wine appreciation will be part of the program.

This series is intended for individuals who have no time to take the full time professional culinary program and yet would like to acquire the necessary basic skills, tools and techniques to enable them to enter a more lucrative world of recreational and even, professional cooking and baking. This series will culminate with a lunch buffet prepared by the students.

Tesda Accredited Program. This 20-day, 28 session course will be handled by chef-restaurateurs and consultant and will be limited to 25 students. Enrollment includes ingredients, chef's jacket, manual and chef's kit

Classes will start October. Enrollment is ongoing.
For inquiries and reservations, call 726-9326 or 725-5089 and look for Marilyn or Glady.

You may have to look a gift horse in the mouth

By Linda B. Bolido

THE CONSUMER

LAST WEEK, TWO WOMEN WORKING in Makati City almost fell victims to a scam that is a variation of the better-known *dugo-dugo*.

If you don't know it yet, *dugo-dugo* involves strangers calling to say somebody in the family met an accident and is in need of cash.

In this new scam, the first woman got a call from a Dr. Montelibano. The caller claimed she just returned from abroad and brought packages from the woman's relatives. The doctor said cash of US$100 was in one of the boxes. But excess baggage charges had to be paid for the boxes' release.

The caller was a little vague about the name of the sender and merely agreed with what the other party said. "Dr. Montelibano" asked for P1,500 to pay airline charges.

But the recipient of the "goodies" knew her relatives well. They would not send packages. She told the caller she did not have the money.

As soon as she finished talking to the doctor, she contacted her relatives who denied knowing a Dr. Montelibano.

Better informed

The caller in the next incident did her homework well. Introducing herself as Dr. Lacson, she told the part-time employee of a travel agency that the latter's sister sent US$400 and several packages. Again, the boxes could not be released because excess baggage charges had to be paid.

"Dr. Lacson" was more convincing, as she knew the name of the woman's United States-based sister and another sister, talking about them like they were old friends.

The caller asked the woman for P2,900 for airline charges and said her nephew would collect the cash.

The woman was really expecting to get something from her sister abroad and initially believed "Dr. Lacson's" story. But after she put the phone down, she realized nobody knew her office number, not even the people in her house.

Since she was only doing part-time work, she did not find it necessary to give her office number. Relatives and friends could call her on her mobile. She did not even have the office number memorized and had to look it up every time she was asked for it.

She sent a text message to her sister in the US to confirm "Dr. Lacson's" story. As she waited for a reply, "Dr. Lacson's" nephew called to say he had parked the Pajero at a 7-Eleven branch near the woman's office. He asked her to meet her there.

Still waiting for her sister's reply, the woman went to the store and was immediately greeted with a *beso-beso* by a man who addressed her as "Tita." He was in a hurry to get the money but the woman said she would give the money when he brought the boxes. Fortunately for her, the man simply left.

Later her sister told her she did not know any Dr. Lacson. Packages arrived a few days after through door-to-door delivery, as was her sister's practice.

What puzzled the woman was how "Dr. Lacson" knew she worked in that office and how she got the number. If her relatives did not know the number, how could the "doctor" have known?

The incidents should be a warning to everyone not to be too willing to share personal information, especially with people you don't know.

Often people would seem to have called the wrong number and start fishing for information, making you feel like they suspect you are hiding the person they are looking for.

Sometimes they will tell you they saw your name on the phone book and they think you may be related to them or someone they know.

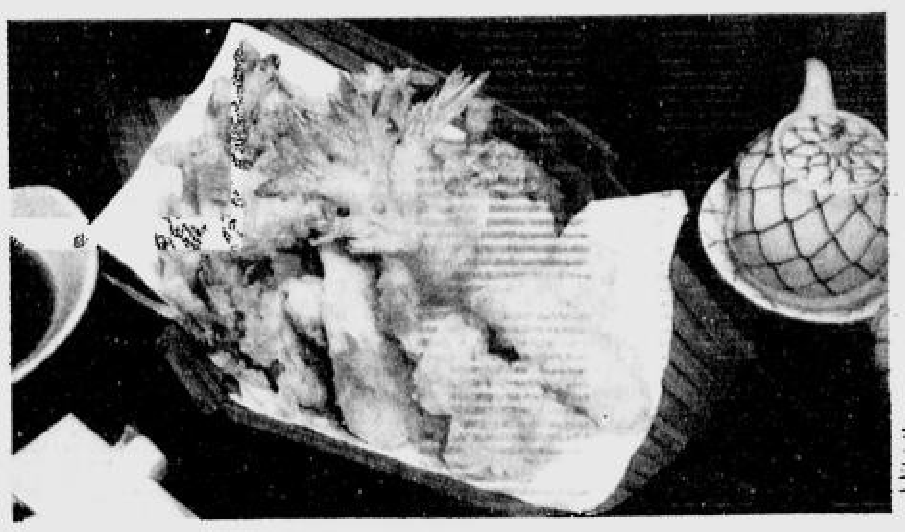
Never share any personal information with strange callers regardless of the stories they hand you. Warn everyone in the household not to be too eager to make friends with people who dial your number "by mistake."

And now, as these two stories suggest, even offices should be wary about callers who seem to be simply fishing for information.

Please send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; PO Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph

SPECIAL DISCOUNT

Kimpura Japanese Restaurant marks its 36th anniversary by offering a 20-percent discount on à la carte orders of its popular tempura/*age mono* (deep-fried dishes). The offer is good until Oct. 24. Kimpura is open daily for lunch and dinner. Its outlets are at the 2/L Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City (8932307/8924456) and Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan (7218816/8869).



Rice-ing Pinoy cooking

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

MY SISTER WHO WORKS as a Maryknoll missioner in Panama told me that the usual food combination in that Central American country was rice and beans.

Since she is also a medical doctor, she wondered why two carbohydrates were put together.

I thought of her when I was told that in the Cordilleras, rice and beans were also eaten together. That information came from Mara Pardo de Tavera who decided to illustrate the point by serving the combination for lunch.

On the round side table, there were three kinds of rice. Mara said the beige short-grain was the *kamuros* variety, an aromatic rice that's slightly glutinous. There was the long grain brown *unoy* that's best mixed with some *kamuros*. And the black *unoy* that had a nutty flavor.

Mara supplies rice from the mountain provinces. This season, it comes from the Chananaw Village in Kalinga. She hopes that restaurants in Manila would include upland rice in the menu.

Convivial meal

This week, she organized a Slow Food Convivium at Le Soufflé in Rockwell Makati. Cordillera rice was highlighted on the menu prepared by chefs Ed Quimson and Jessie Sincioco.

Starters had *buro* of fermented Kalinga rice. Boiled rice accompanied the main courses.

But, for lunch that day, there were the corresponding beans—lima, white and red kidney beans—mostly cooked with some broth. The broth added flavor to the beans which, in turn, added flavor to the rice. One broth involved coconut milk mixed with lemon grass.

While consuming Cordillera rice and the beans, we also talked of rice and the terraces. I confessed I hadn't even visited the Banaue rice terraces but swore I would next summer.

That lunch was my tasty research into rice that also took me to another venue. I remembered how Mina Gabor, former tourism secretary, opened a restaurant specializing in different rice varieties. But that was ages ago and I wondered if the place was still there.

Gabor's good friend, Glenda Barretto, took me to The Garden House Restaurant in Pasay City (1 Sta. Escolastica St. corner Roxas Blvd., tel. 8342993).

It's easy to miss because the sign isn't that big and the place is a house rather than a building.

Susan Baltazar, restaurant manager, had the available varieties displayed at the entrance. Unlike Mara's Cordillera rice, Baltazar sources her mostly upland grains from Cagayan province.

Sinandomeng was familiar because it's what most restaurants use. The others had general terms, such as red, brown, mestizo hybrid and healthy rice.

Rare varieties

The better information was on the menu, printed on rice paper. It listed the rare varieties that thankfully were still available. Only three were familiar—*pirurutong* or purple rice (used in real *puto bumbong*), *milagrosa* and *wagwag*.

The unfamiliar varieties had quite descriptive names. Binirhen and Apostol are grown in Ilocos Norte. Bukidnon has a red rice called *burgadol*. Batangas has *daggo* and *kinandang patong*. Cavite grows an upland rice called *initlog dalag*. A black rice variety called *kutong* is from Cagayan de Oro. A glutinous upland rice called *makapilay pusa* can be found in Batangas and Nueva Ecija. Southern Leyte grows *tapul* and La Fortuna. The *malagkit sungsong* can be obtained from Nueva Ecija, Batangas, Laguna and Oriental Mindoro.

For lunch that day, Baltazar cooked black rice paella. My first taste of this was in Cendrillon, New York City, where Romy Dorotan's Pan-Asian cuisine was receiving good reviews from food critics.

The Garden Restaurant serves the paella with seafood, presented with the shells standing on the rice. The nutty flavor of the black rice (*kutong*) was especially good. Mara said black *unoy* would be perfect for the paella as well.

The other dish was chicken *guinataan* that could be taken with either brown rice fried in garlic or yellow rice topped with mango scoops.

We were unmindful of carbo loading and even capped our lunch with some rice coffee with the strong taste and aroma of toasted rice.

A first

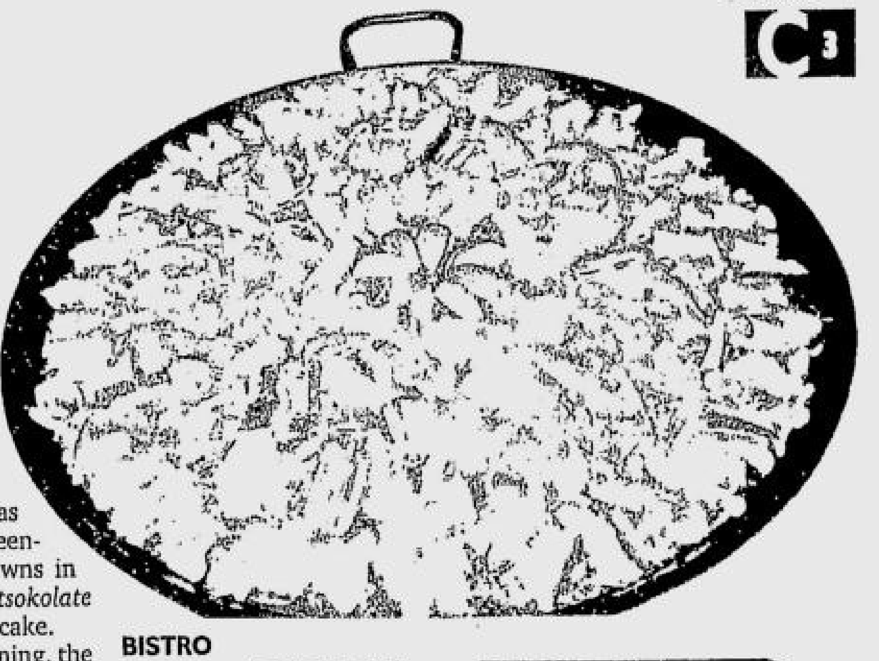
But my first rice-rich dining experience was in the Year of the Rice Celebration in 2004. The Manila Ladies Branch of the International Wine and Food Society had dinner at the Bistro Remedios (corner Remedios and M. Adriatico Streets, Manila) and had on exhibit different rice varieties.

The appetizer was upland red rice called *kintoman* made into a kind of sushi wrapped in *nori*, each piece topped with salted fried shrimp. There was the restaurant's bamboo rice, the grains cooked inside bamboo tubes. There was *bringhe*, rice cooked in turmeric and coconut milk. And the black rice paella topped with deep-fried pork belly (*lechon kawali*).

Completing our rice experience was the *duman*, the rare and expensive greenish immature rice grown in two towns in Pampanga. *Duman* was mixed with *tsokolate eh* (espresso) and made into a native cake.

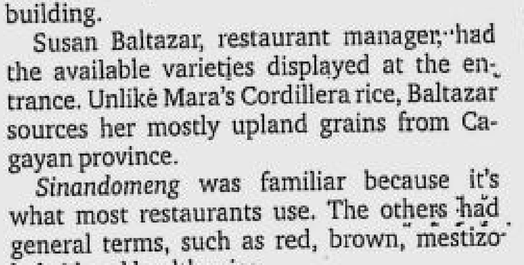
It was uncanny that that same evening, the Branch honored the winner of the Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Award who wrote on *binuburan*, the Bontoc fermented rice.

Joy Subido brought a sample of the rice cake made of a white, short-grained rice called *walay parehas*. She warned that it's an acquired taste and those who tried it said it tasted like *tapuy*, the rice wine of the Cordilleras.

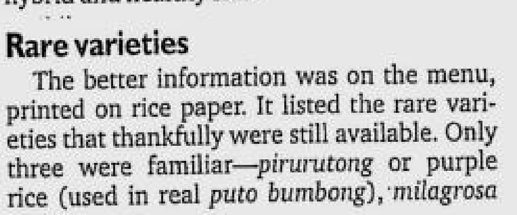


BISTRO rice

GARDEN rice



GARDEN paella



MARA rice

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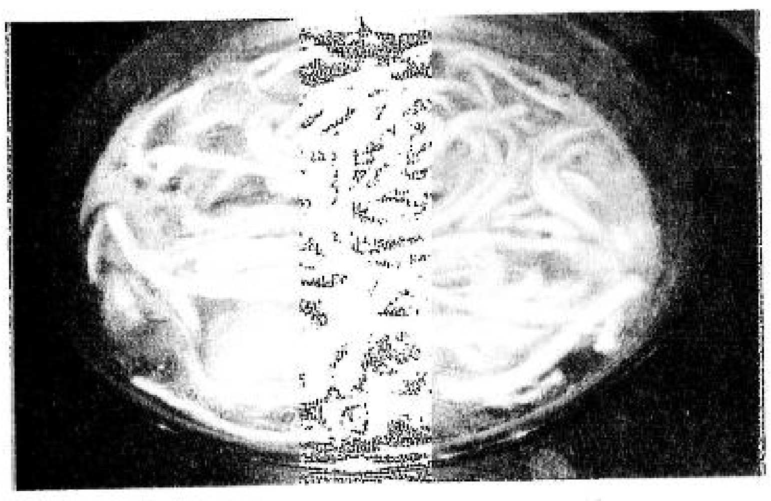
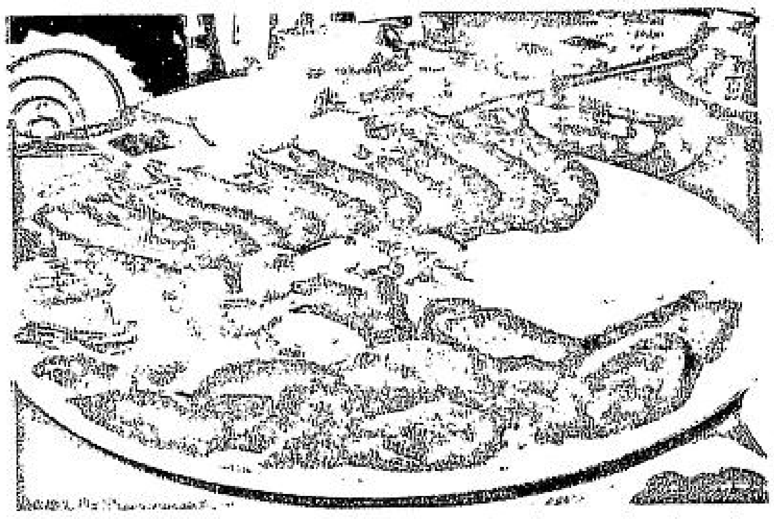


NOODLES may look like they are quick-cooking but Hwang says egg noodles have to stay in the pot for at least 10 minutes before they are done.



HWANG says she has the seafood delivered fresh every day, though she wants to keep her source a secret.

EVERY order comes with a variety of vegetables and the ingredients for the sauce.

'Shabu-shabu' 101

It is not just a matter of choosing the ingredients, but also when to drop them into the soup and how long they should stay there

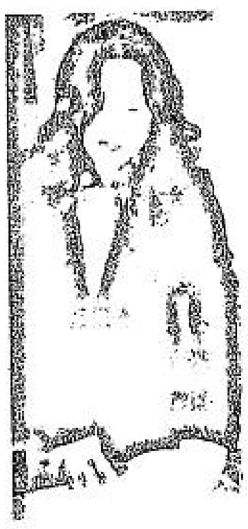
Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

IF YOU HAVEN'T TRIED *shabu-shabu* you might want to start at the Healthy Shabu-Shabu restaurant at the SM Mall of Asia or the newly opened branch at SM North Edsa.

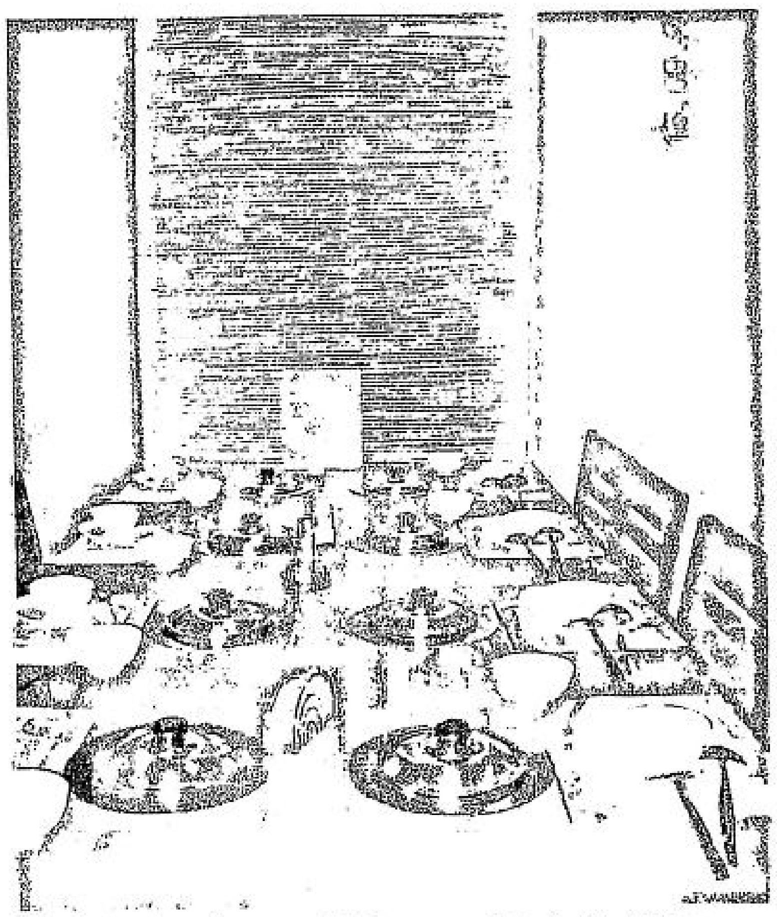
Even if you have and you think you know all there is to know about *shabu-shabu* you still might find it instructive to visit any one of the two places.

Korean-born Candy Hwang, general manager of the restaurant, says her *shabu-shabu* is more than just hot-pot cooking.

Though she now calls it "fusion," Hwang says her *shabu-shabu* adheres more closely to the Japanese origin of the cooking style the way it is presented and served.



CANDY Hwang, general manager



EACH diner has a hot pot so he/she can cook the food to his/her preferred doneness.

You would think there is no mystery to good *shabu-shabu*. All you need is to drop into a pot of boiling chicken stock seafood, meat or poultry, depending on your preference, and some vegetables and noodles.

But Hwang, who started with a mini *shabu-shabu* at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Malate, says that way of cooking makes the dish simply hot pot, not her *shabu-shabu*.

Printed instructions

To truly savor the goodness of the dish and the freshness of the ingredients, Hwang has not only provided printed instructions on every table to guide diners. She has also trained the restaurant staff to provide much-needed advice for tyros and the uninformed who tend to put shrimps, fresh egg noodles and taro all at the same time.

Ingredients have to be added one at a time, Hwang says. The sequence of adding the ingredients, as well as the length of time each is allowed to cook, makes a lot of difference in the kind of *shabu-shabu* you get, she explains.

Seafood, meat or poultry are best put into the pot first to flavor the broth. Meat, sliced very thinly, is done in 20 seconds. Vegetables, too, should stay in the pot for no more than seconds. *Sotanghon* cooks almost instantly, in 20 seconds, while egg noodles should be allowed to stay in the pot for about 15 minutes until it turns transparent.

Taro will, of course, take about 15 minutes, too, to cook.

Both overcooking and undercooking will lessen the quality of the *shabu-shabu*.

Another tip: Before putting the cooked items into your bowl for eating, let them cool in the sauce for a few seconds. That way it also absorbs better the flavor of the sauce so you do not have to dip it repeatedly.

You make your own sauce though they give you all the ingredients you will need.

Complete meal

Hwang says: "*shabu-shabu* is a complete meal. There's soup, vegetables, seafood, meat and noodles."

You do not have to put off going to Healthy Shabu-Shabu until you can rope in a whole army of friends or relatives.

Unlike in other places where the only way to do justice to the dish is to have a whole gang of hearty eaters, the restaurant offers more than 30 sets both for group and individual servings.

Each set consists of 15 items divided into a tray for the main ingredients and another tray for vegetables, including sweet corn, cabbage, *pechay*, mushrooms, as well as *kani*, tofu, fish cake, squid ball and noodles.

For variety, you and your friends or family can opt to have individual sets so you get to taste different things, instead of ordering one group set.

BAMBOO at the entrance is a simple but pretty way to "screen" diners.

Hwang, who personally attends to the marketing for the restaurant, assures customers everything they serve is fresh, delivered daily though she wants to keep her source secret.

Freshness is very apparent particularly in the seafood—the shrimps much bigger than the wimpish things you get in many other places. The restaurant makes its own fish and shrimp balls and fish cake.

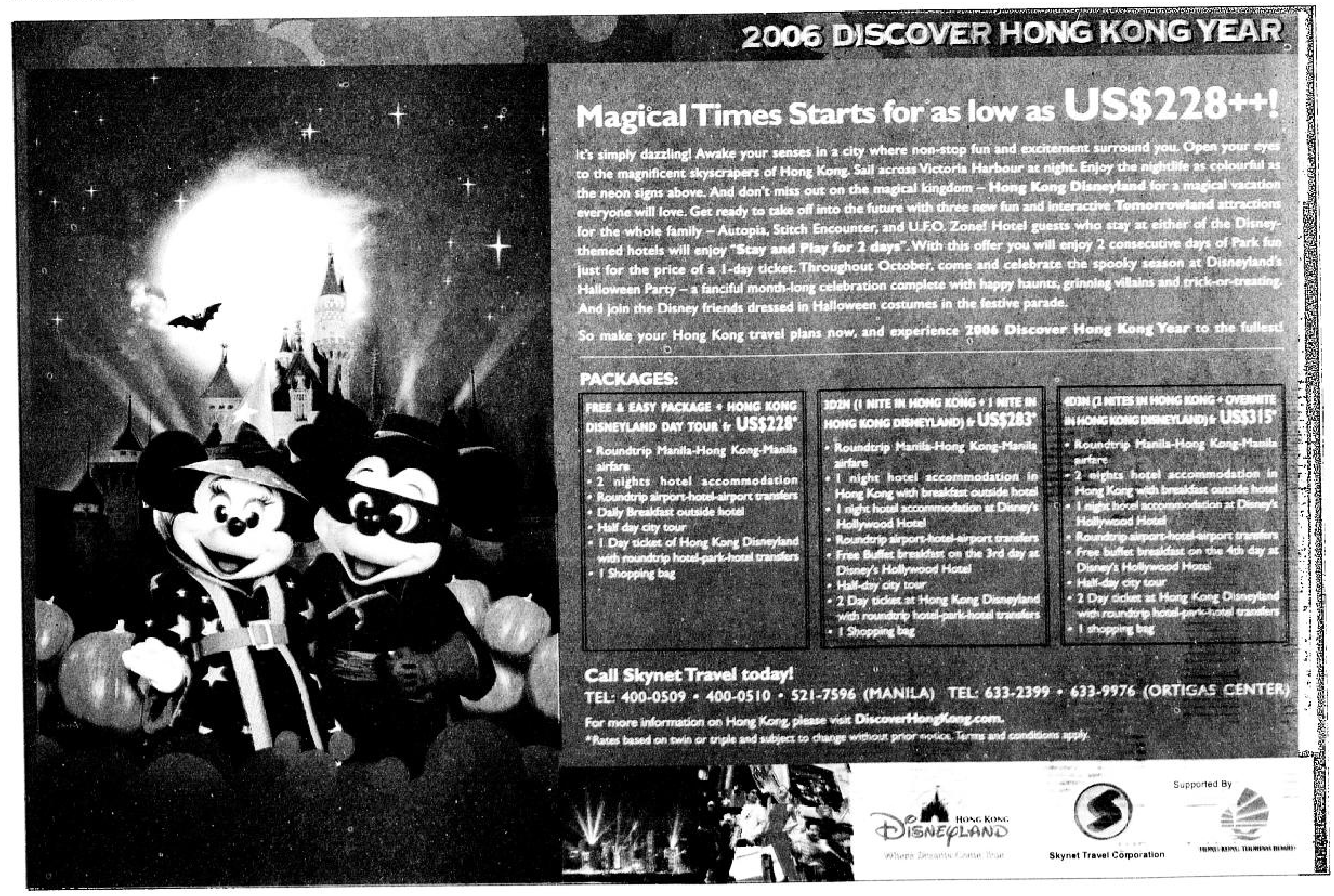
Here's the basic how-to:

1. Let the soup boil. Cook for 15 minutes sweet corn and taro .
2. Add the fast-cooking ingredients, letting the soup boil for one to two minutes: vegetables, tofu, squid ball and meat balls, fish cake, etc.
3. For better-tasting seafood, cook for less than 10 minutes shrimp, fish fillet, crab and sea cucumber.
4. Cook for less than 20 seconds meat, sotanghon, oysters and squid to keep them juicy and tender.
5. Noodles should be put last—and cooked for 15 minutes—when the soup has already acquired a rich taste.

Healthy Shabu-Shabu does not use *vetsin* or monosodium glutamate in its dishes. The restaurant also serves dumplings, rice toppings and tempura, among others, aside from *shabu-shabu*, and offers fresh fruit juices.

Each *shabu-shabu* order comes with a free dessert of fresh fruits while rice toppings are served with soup.

Healthy Shabu-Shabu is at 2/L, Unit 225-226 Entertainment Center, SM Mall of Asia (tel. 5560354/55). If you visit late afternoon, you get to enjoy for free a ringside view of one of the most spectacular scenes the Philippines has to offer—the Manila Bay sunset. At SM North Edsa, it is at 3/F, SM City Annex 3.



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Mōnmilk
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Will 'Kumander' Nene follow the commands of her heart?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

- EVEN IF NENE "KUMANDER" TAMAYO keeps downplaying her special friendship with former "Pinoy Big Brother" housemate **Bob de la Cruz**, the twinkle in her eye every time she mentions his name is a giveaway "He surprised me during the eve of my birthday. I can't say for sure if he's courting me. *Panliligaw na ba 'yong ma*-meet *ko* family *niya? Gano'n na kami ka*-close." Will "Kumander" follow the commands of her heart?

- **John Prats** brushes off rumors that he's courting "Super Noypi" co-star Katrina Halili. "Show biz as it may sound, friends *lang kami*. I have a girlfriend who's not in show biz. She's **Miakka Lim** (daughter of former PBA cager **Frankie Lim** and model **Olen**). Student *pa siya*," John reveals. "I'm so happy and satisfied with my love life now. I hope it will be forever *na*!" Looks like it's for keeps because John is not keeping it a secret. He's more than proud to let the world know that he's spoken already.

His actions speak as loud as his words!

- Could it be true that **Willlie Revillame** now stays in an undisclosed location because many people are ganging up on him after his separation from Liz Almoro? Insiders claim that his life is in danger. Liz filed for annulment recently. Both parties refuse to comment about the case due to legal impediments.

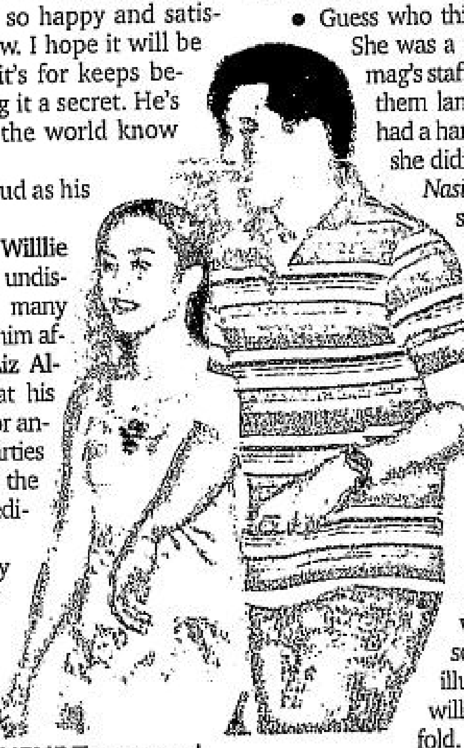
I know how emotionally draining an annulment process is.

Been there, felt that.

So let's just go easy on the estranged couple instead of going "Wowowee" at every speculation there is about why their marriage failed.

- I couldn't help but flash back to the days when my Kumpareng **Alvin Patrimonio** was still playing for Mapua. That's when our friendship started.

Interviewing his *unico hijo* Angelo, who's being groomed by ABS-CBN to be the next matinee idol, reminded me so much of how Alvin was like when I first met him.



NENE Tamayo and Bob de la Cruz

RUDY ESPERAS

Angelo is a carbon copy of his dad in every way. But he wants to excel not just in basketball. "If I can make it big in both show biz and the hard court, why not?" With a supportive dad like Alvin, how can he fail?

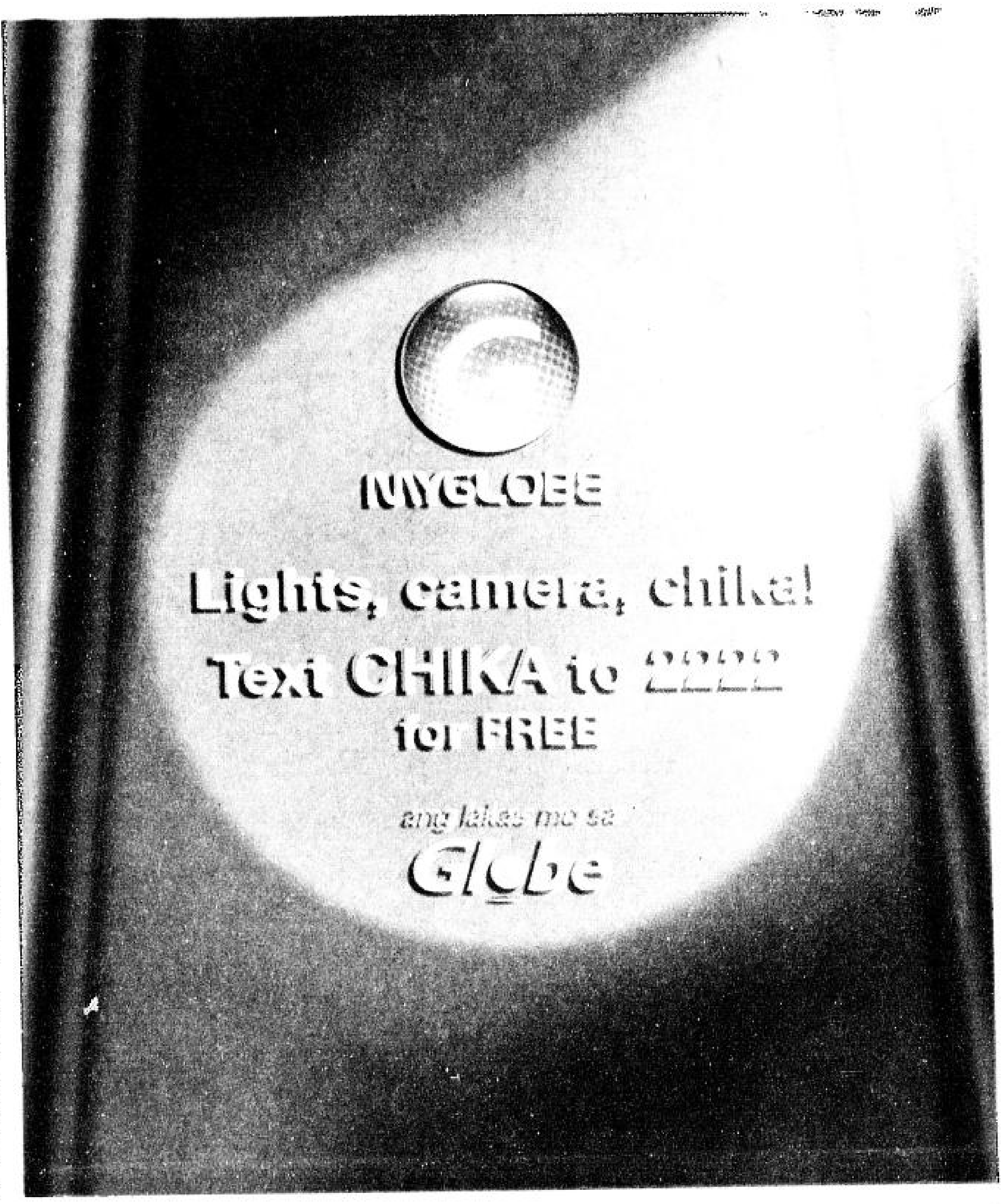
Guess list

- Guess who this young mestiza actress is! She was a major headache of a glossy mag's staff during her pictorial. One of them lamented, "Our makeup artist had a hard time fixing her up because she didn't want too many lights on. *Nasisilaw daw siya kaya naka*-shades *pa habang inaayusan*! And *di pa nakontento sa* big mirror in front of her. *May hawak pa siyang* small mirror! *Kaka*-turn off *siya*! *Daming* tissue in her underarm because it was so wet. *Kaya pala ayaw niya ng sobrang liwanag*!"

It's quite appalling because she seems so sweet and fresh onscreen. Looks can really be deceiving. Beware! The images on your TV screen may just be an optical illusion. For sure, the actress will no longer land on the centerfold. The peeved staff would rather fold her pictures and throw them away!

- Guess who this actress-host is. She's been praising her husband to high heavens. What she doesn't know is he used to live with a non-show biz girl for many years and he left her devastated. As the girl's cousin told me, "He cheated on my cousin. *Sana nga nagbago na siya. Napapaisip lang ako* when I hear the actress on TV saying *na* he's an ideal husband. When he was with my cousin,

WILL KUMANDER/ D3



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Regine celebrates 20 years in show biz

By Nini Valera

REGINE VELASQUEZ HAS WORKED NONstop for the past 20 years, enduring trends and time and coming to terms with life.

If there were regrets, Regine said she looks at them as part of learning.

In the face of a whirlwind of activities for her movie with Robin Padilla, GMA Films' "Till I Met You," Regine called a press conference for her concert "RV 20" on the week typhoon Milenyo wrought its fury in the country.

"Not everybody has reached this stage," Regine told INQUIRER Entertainment, referring to her 20th year in the business. "At first, I didn't want to celebrate it, but on second thought, I decided to hold this concert. It's an event, anyway. So why not celebrate?"

But a celebration for something as momentous as 20 years in the business was hard for Regine to do. For the fourth time, she had to produce a concert herself.

"It's sad," she said. "The state of the (entertainment) industry has made it so difficult for concerts to be mounted. The artists have to do it themselves. It's difficult to look for sponsors. Thank God, none of my productions have flopped."

Regine pulled out all the stops in mounting this concert, produced to the tune of P10 million. The Araneta Coliseum, where it will be staged on Oct. 13 and 14 will be transformed into a Roman Coliseum, with a grand staircase from the center stage to the upper box gallery where Regine will make her grand entrance.

To produce the show, she has reunited with longtime mentor Ronnie Henares, whom she called "my second father."

Ronnie discovered Regine when she guested on "Penthouse Live" 20 years ago. Then named Chona Velasquez, Regine was plucked from obscurity by Ronnie, who for 15 years, guided her career and molded her into an artist. He also gave her the name Regine.

"There are few regrets in my life," she admitted. "I never got to attend a high school prom or ball. I have not finished college, but I'm sure I can go back to school if I want to.

"There was also a time that I imagined myself to be a teacher. But that time is now gone. I can't imagine myself anymore as anything else but a singer."

At a young age, Regine used her singing talent to support her family.

"My father (Mang Gerry) really, really worked hard, but he couldn't make ends meet," she recalled. "He has scoliosis, and he worked in construction. My brother and sisters might not remember this, but we had a very hard time. I saw the desperation on my parents' faces. I knew I could do something to help out. I knew I could sing.

"I feel so blessed that I was able to do this for my family. I am happy that God chose me to be the one to help my family. I enjoy singing, so why not use it to help my family? Why not use this gift?"

For 20 years, Regine has cultivated this gift of song. Forays into acting were few and far between.

"I knew my limitations," she said. "I can't be a good dramatic actress. So I deliberately chose roles that were a little bit of drama and comedy. But I like to make movies. Like my singing, acting created opportunities for me."

But she chooses to sing more than anything else.

"It's what I do best," she said.

REGINE Velasquez with Robin Padilla

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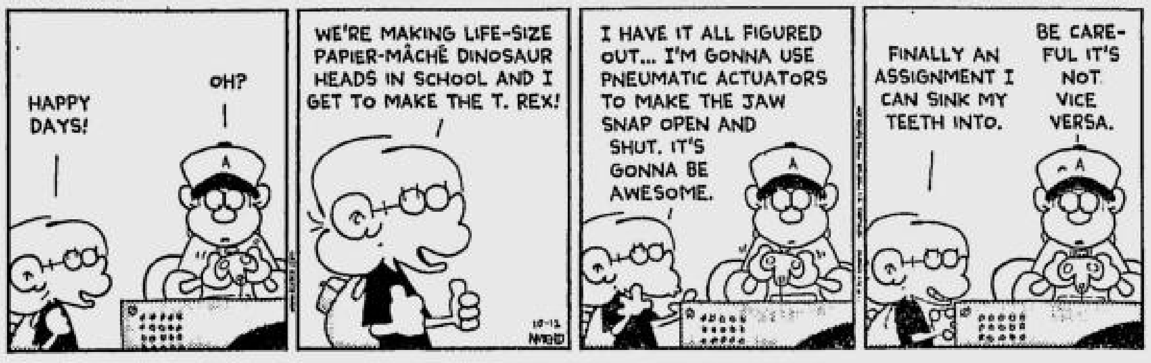
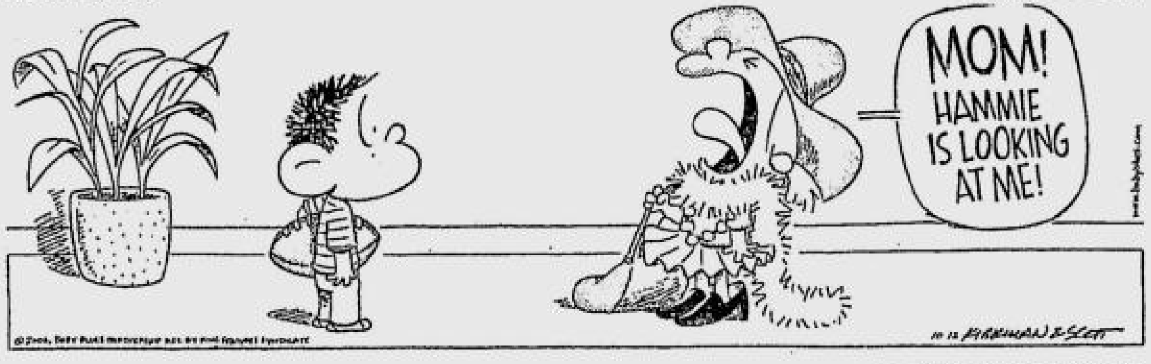
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HAPPY DAYS!
OH?
WE'RE MAKING LIFE-SIZE PAPIER-MÂCHÉ DINOSAUR HEADS IN SCHOOL AND I GET TO MAKE THE T. REX!
I HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT... I'M GONNA USE PNEUMATIC ACTUATORS TO MAKE THE JAW SNAP OPEN AND SHUT. IT'S GONNA BE AWESOME.
FINALLY AN ASSIGNMENT I CAN SINK MY TEETH INTO.
BE CAREFUL IT'S NOT VICE VERSA.

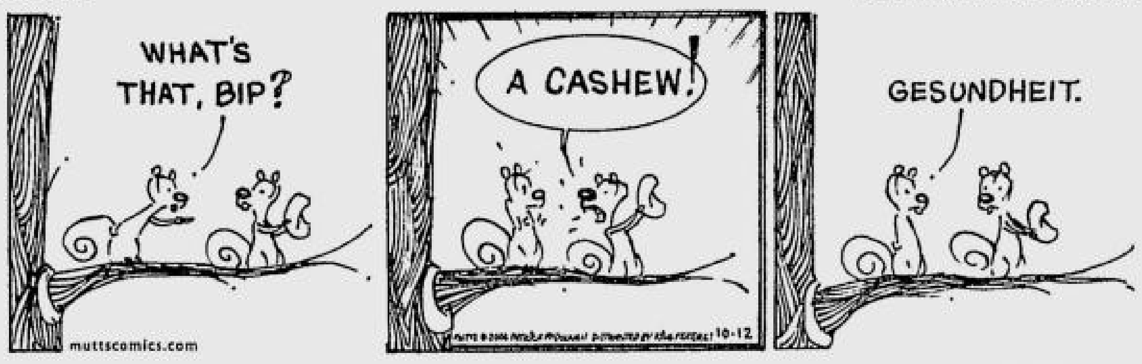
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM! HAMMIE IS LOOKING AT ME!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

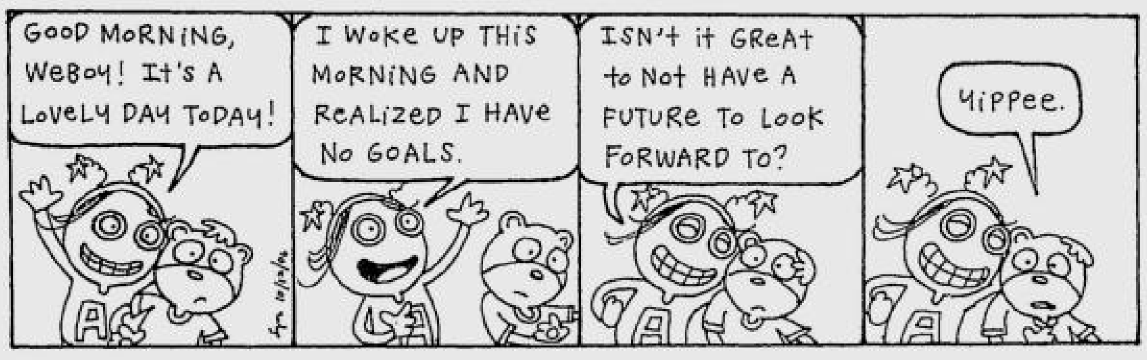
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S THAT, BIP?
A CASHEW!
GESUNDHEIT.
muttscomics.com
10-12

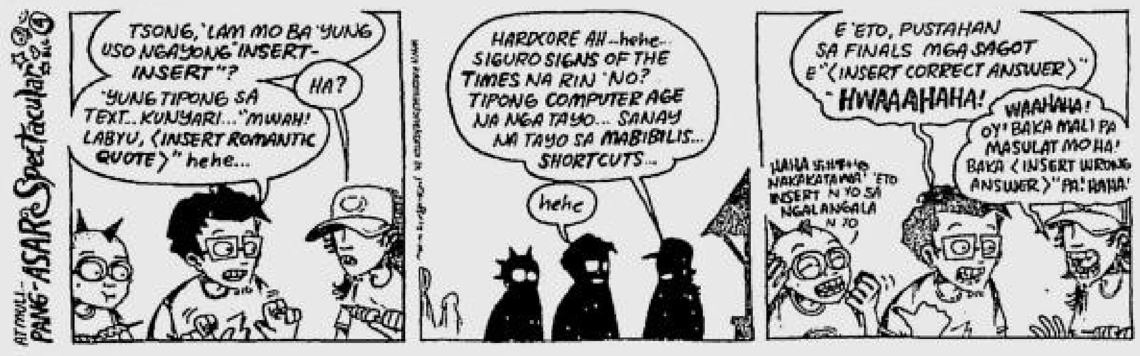
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


GOOD MORNING, WEBOY! It's A LOVELY DAY TODAY!
I WOKE UP THIS MORNING AND REALIZED I HAVE NO GOALS.
ISN't it GREAt to Not HAVE A FUTURE To Look FORWARD To?
Yippee.

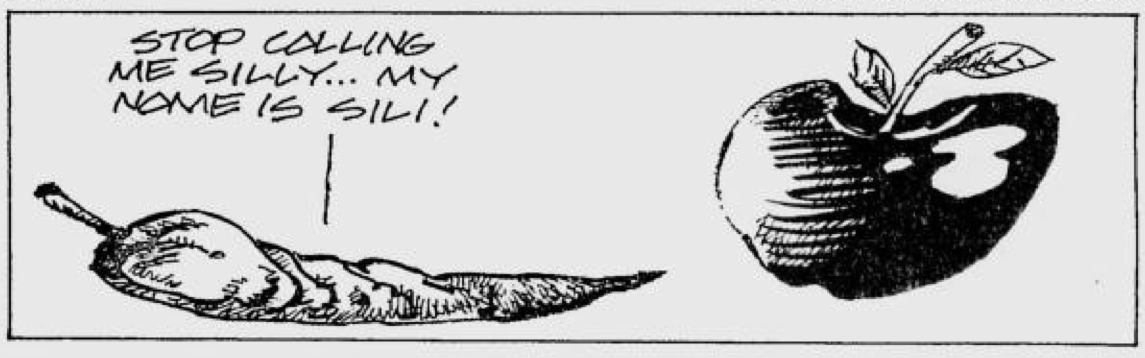
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ATMULI-PANG-ASAR Spectacular
TSONG, 'LAM MO BA 'YUNG USO NGAYONG 'INSERT-INSERT"?
HA?
'YUNG TIPONG SA TEXT... KUNYARI..."MWAH! LABYU, (INSERT ROMANTIC QUOTE)" hehe...
HARDCORE AH--hehe-- SIGURO SIGNS OF THE TIMES NA RIN 'NO? TIPONG COMPUTER AGE NA NGA TAYO... SANAY NA TAYO SA MABIBILIS... SHORTCUTS...
hehe
E 'ETO, PUSTAHAN SA FINALS MGA SAGOT E"(INSERT CORRECT ANSWER)" -HWAAAHAHA!
WAAHAHA! OY! BAKA MALI PA MASULAT MO HA! BAKA (INSERT WRONG ANSWER)" PA! HAHA!
HAHA NAKAKATAWA! 'ETO INSERT N'YO SA NGALANGALA N'YO

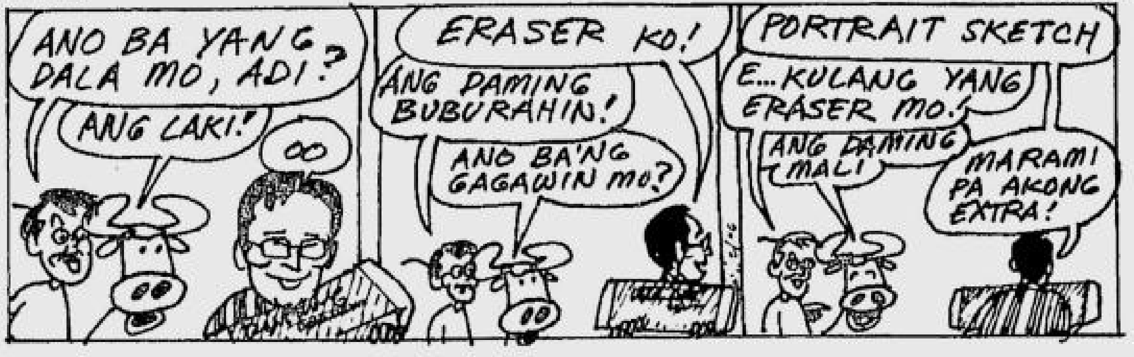
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


STOP CALLING ME SILLY... MY NAME IS SILI!

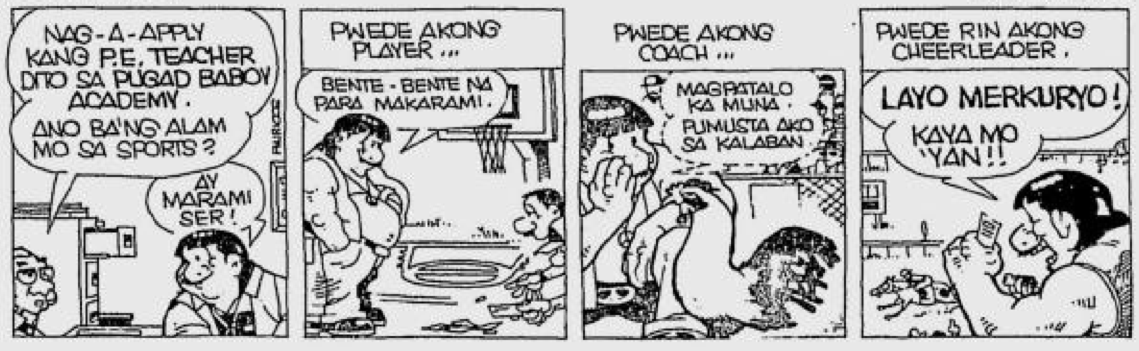
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANO BA YANG DALA MO, ADI?
ANG LAKI!
OO
ERASER KO!
ANG DAMING BUBURAHIN!
ANO BA'NG GAGAWIN MO?
PORTRAIT SKETCH
E... KULANG YANG ERASER MO!
ANG DAMING MALI
MARAMI PA AKONG EXTRA!

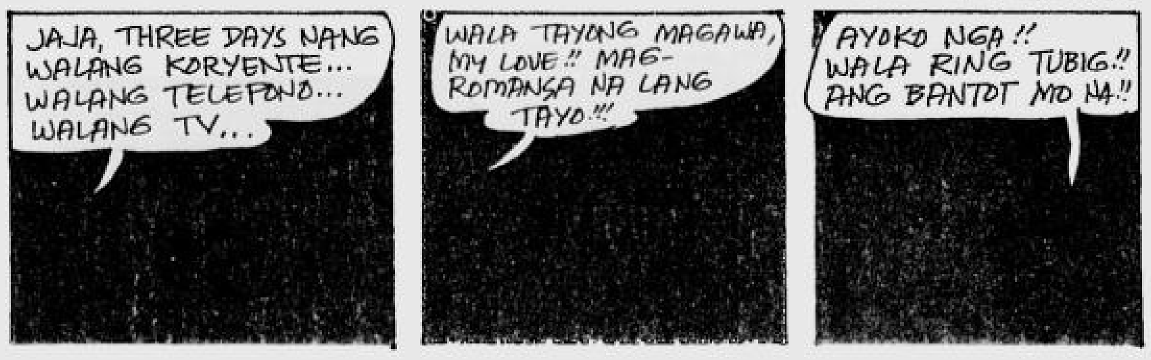
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAG-A-APPLY KANG P.E. TEACHER DITO SA PUGAD BABOY ACADEMY. ANO BA'NG ALAM MO SA SPORTS?
AY MARAMI SER!
PWEDE AKONG PLAYER ...
BENTE - BENTE NA PARA MAKARAMI.
PWEDE AKONG COACH ...
MAGPATALO KA MUNA. PUMUSTA AKO SA KALABAN.
PWEDE RIN AKONG CHEERLEADER.
LAYO MERKURYO!
KAYA MO 'YAN!!

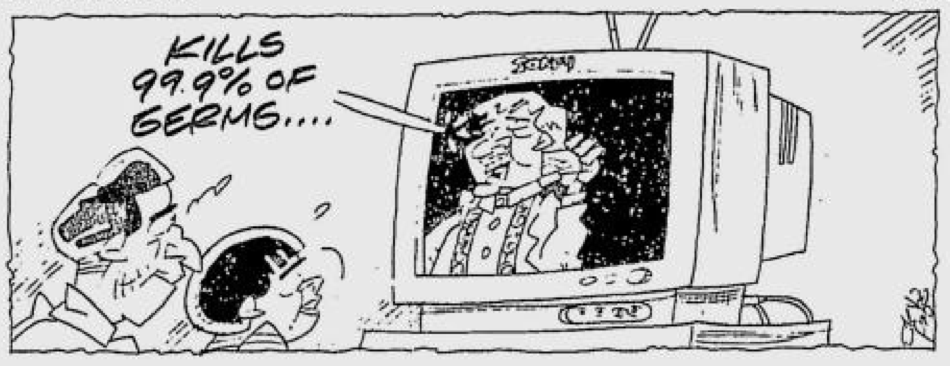
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, THREE DAYS NANG WALANG KORYENTE... WALANG TELEPONO... WALANG TV...
WALA TAYONG MAGAWA, MY LOVE!! MAG-ROMANSA NA LANG TAYO!!!
AYOKO NGA!! WALA RING TUBIG!! ANG BANTOT MO NA!!

DIVINE COMEDY

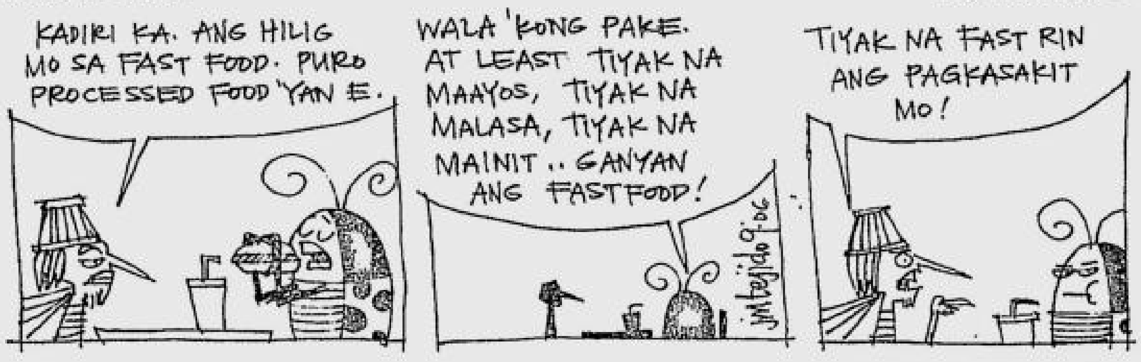
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


KILLS 99.9% OF GERMS....

NAGING ENDORSER NG SABONG SAFEGARD ANG ISANG CONGRESSMAN. PERO HINDI NAG-APPEAR SA TV SCREEN ANG KONSIYENSYA NYA DAHIL WALA NAMAN SYA NITO

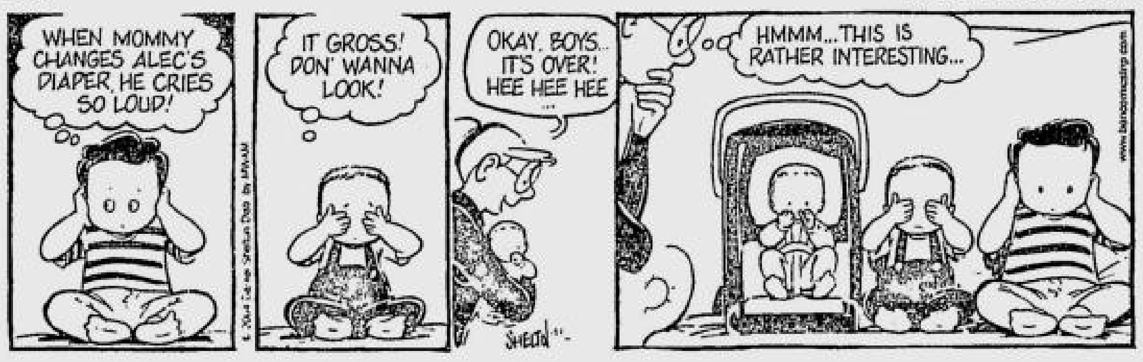
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KADIRI KA. ANG HILIG MO SA FAST FOOD. PURO PROCESSED FOOD 'YAN E.
WALA 'KONG PAKE. AT LEAST TIYAK NA MAAYOS, TIYAK NA MALASA, TIYAK NA MAINIT.. GANYAN ANG FASTFOOD!
TIYAK NA FAST RIN ANG PAGKASAKIT MO!
jmtejido 9-06

BEN

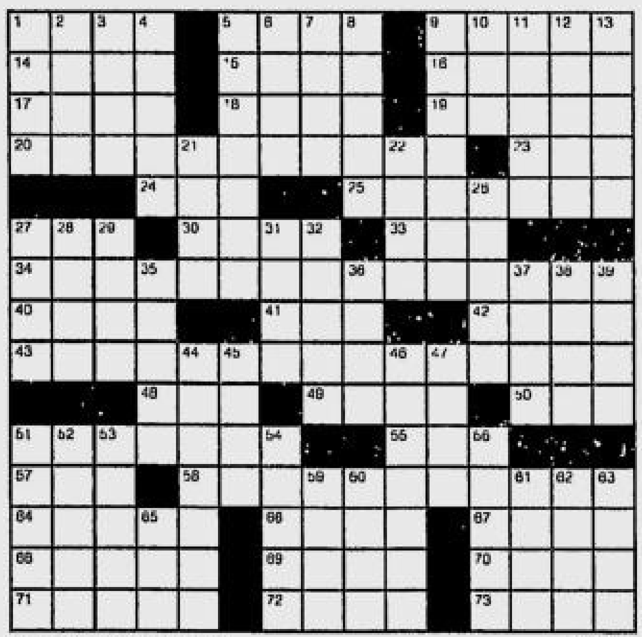
BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHEN MOMMY CHANGES ALEC'S DIAPER, HE CRIES SO LOUD!
IT GROSS! DON' WANNA LOOK!
OKAY, BOYS. IT'S OVER! HEE HEE HEE ...
HMMM... THIS IS RATHER INTERESTING...
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Starter starter?
5 Poker winnings
9 Damp
14 Poet Angelou
15 Artifice
16 Liquid measure
17 Hosiery shade
18 Biblical twin
19 Lowest deck
20 Start of Olin Miller quote
23 Black cuckoo
24 Doctors' org.
25 Turned outward
27 PC key
30 Chemical grouping
33 Vacuum's lack
34 Part 2 of quote
40 Wear out
41 Corp. head
42 Arabian gulf
43 Part 3 of quote
48 Notable time
49 Ticket info
50 WWII landing craft
51 Passage
55 Ave. crossers
57 Gray soldier, briefly
58 End of quote
64 Violin maker
66 __-do-well
67 Suffer stiffness
68 Mountaineer's spike
69 Alum
70 Pack down tightly
71 Cubic meter
72 Evening in Bologna
73 River of New York

DOWN
1 Old World duck
2 Apiece
3 Greek harp
4 Animals of a region
5 Get ready
6 River into the Wash
7 Russian ruler
8 "Green Eggs and Ham" author
9 Like nights in white satin?
10 Possessive pronoun
11 Dental filling
12 Doughy pastry
13 Lukewarm
21 Indian nursemaid
22 Gemstone from Down Under
26 Enlightened Buddhist
27 Italian wine region
28 Cafe au __
29 Neophyte
31 Social org. founded in 1858
32 Legal claims
35 Craps number
36 Mineral bonanza
37 Pastoral poem
38 Modernists
39 "Hunger" author Hamsun
44 Writer Caldwell
45 Downpour
46 Noted Dodgers skipper
47 Accusatory words to Brutus
51 Pitfalls
52 Pay the bill
53 Lessen
54 Grasping device
56 Use the rink
59 Used to be
60 Solar period
61 Final Four letters
62 Resistance units
63 Cried
65 Craggy hill



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

10/12/06

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

L	A	W	S	■	B	E	A	N	O	■	D	O	E	R
E	B	R	O	■	A	R	L	E	S	■	E	R	L	E
G	U	I	L	T	Y	A	S	C	H	A	R	G	E	D
A	S	T	O	R	S	■	■	T	A	M	■	A	V	E
T	E	E	N	Y	■	S	E	A	■	P	A	N	A	Y
O	D	S	■	■	C	A	P	R	A	■	M	I	T	E
■	■	■	A	T	A	R	I	■	S	E	I	Z	E	S
■	C	A	S	E	D	I	S	M	I	S	S	E	D	■
L	A	T	H	E	R	■	T	R	A	S	H	■	■	■
E	S	T	E	■	E	L	L	E	N	■	■	P	A	W
S	T	E	R	E	■	O	E	D	■	S	A	R	D	I
S	I	N	■	A	L	A	■	■	S	A	L	O	O	N
O	R	D	E	R	I	N	T	H	E	C	O	U	R	T
N	O	E	S	■	M	E	R	I	T	■	I	S	E	E
S	N	E	E	■	B	R	A	T	S	■	S	T	E	R

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10/12/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Everyone knows that you're generous and big-hearted. This is often why you're the center of attention. You have a good business sense. People enjoy your wit and entertaining personality. You're definitely not afraid to indulge yourself! Your flamboyance and flair for life are memorable. You will have to make an important decision this year. Do what's best for you.

Birthdate of: Hugh Jackman, actor; Luciano Pavarotti, tenor; Martie Maguire, musician/singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day to sit down with someone and discuss (in practical terms) the best approach to a creative project or how to work with children. Romantic couples might also make serious plans.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Not only do you have a lot of energy today, you're also determined and extremely persevering. You can accomplish a tremendous amount. Get down to it!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your efforts to work with children will be very successful today. Similarly, the arts and creative projects will go extremely well. You're tireless in going after what you want.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a great day to make repairs at home. You're in the mood to work, and you want long-term results for your efforts. (Great!)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Sit down with someone today to make long-range plans. You're very convincing because you believe what you're saying. (A good product always sells itself.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Work hard to increase your earnings now. This is also an excellent day for business, commerce and all financial transactions.. You smell money!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Any kind of physical activity will please you today. Your endurance levels are particularly high. You can work or exercise for a long time.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You might have to work on behalf of others today. You're working behind the scenes as well. At some point today, you'll be selfless and put others ahead of you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Group sports will please you today. Actually, any kind of group activity (especially physical) will be satisfying. You have a lot of determination and strength today

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Others are extremely impressed with you now. For one thing, you're working hard. This does not go unnoticed. Keep it up, because you might get a raise or a promotion.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You can really plow through some dry studying if you have to today. You have the disciplined energy necessary to get the job done. You're very focused.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is the day to tackle detailed, precision work that requires concentration and focus. You'll have no trouble finishing the task at hand. Insurance matters, shared property, inheritances and debt are good places to begin.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

5					7		4	2
7				6	9	8		
	1				8			
9	6	2						
				4				
						1	2	6
			8				6	
		7	6	1				3
4	5		9					8

Difficulty Level ★★★

10/12

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	6	7	4	8	5	3	1	2
5	1	2	7	6	3	4	9	8
3	8	4	1	9	2	6	5	7
7	4	8	5	2	1	9	3	6
2	5	3	9	4	6	7	8	1
1	9	6	3	7	8	5	2	4
4	2	5	8	3	7	1	6	9
8	3	9	6	1	4	2	7	5
6	7	1	2	5	9	8	4	3

Difficulty Level ★★★

Will 'Kumander'…

From page D1

wala siyang stable job and she earned more than him. *Nakakagulat lang na* the actress says *na* good provider *siya*." Did he really have a reversal of fortune or is his actress-wife just reversing his image?

'RV 20'

Don't miss "RV 20," **Regine Velasquez**'s concert celebrating her 20 years in showbiz at the Araneta Coliseum on Oct. 13 and 14 .The Songbird's "love affair" with her fave photographer **Jun de Leon** will be showcased.

There will also be a medley of her duets with **Jose Mari Chan, Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano, Ogie Alcasid, Janno Gibbs, Paul Anka** and **Jackie Cheung** with a modern twist and a medley of her movie themes.

For tickets, call 9115555 or 9267868.

Peace advocate

Kudos to **Carlo Caparas** and **Donna Villa**! Direk Carlo was conferred with the Pylon Perpetual Peace Advocate award by the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

He was chosen for his peace advocacy in his over 800 *komiks* novels, 300 of which became box-office hits. That's one for the books!

Bazaar for a cause

"Tickled Pink" is a different kind of benefit bazaar by and for the I Can Serve foundation.

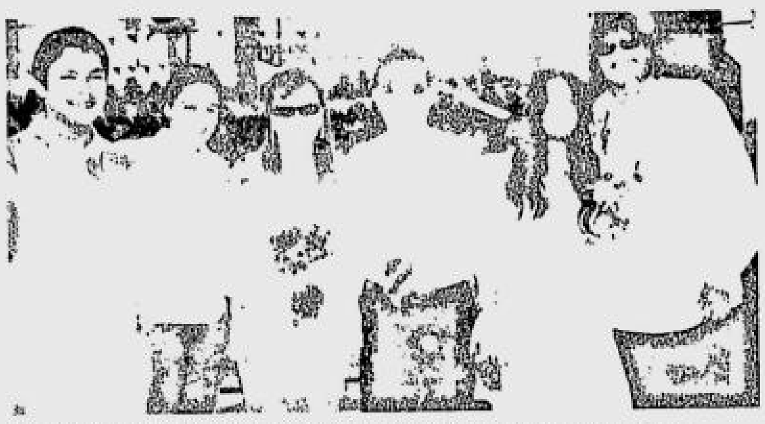
It's on Oct. 14 and 15, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Loft in Rockwell.

Check out the goods of select exporters who rarely sell their merchandise in the country as well as other vendors who will be introducing their products to the market for the first time.

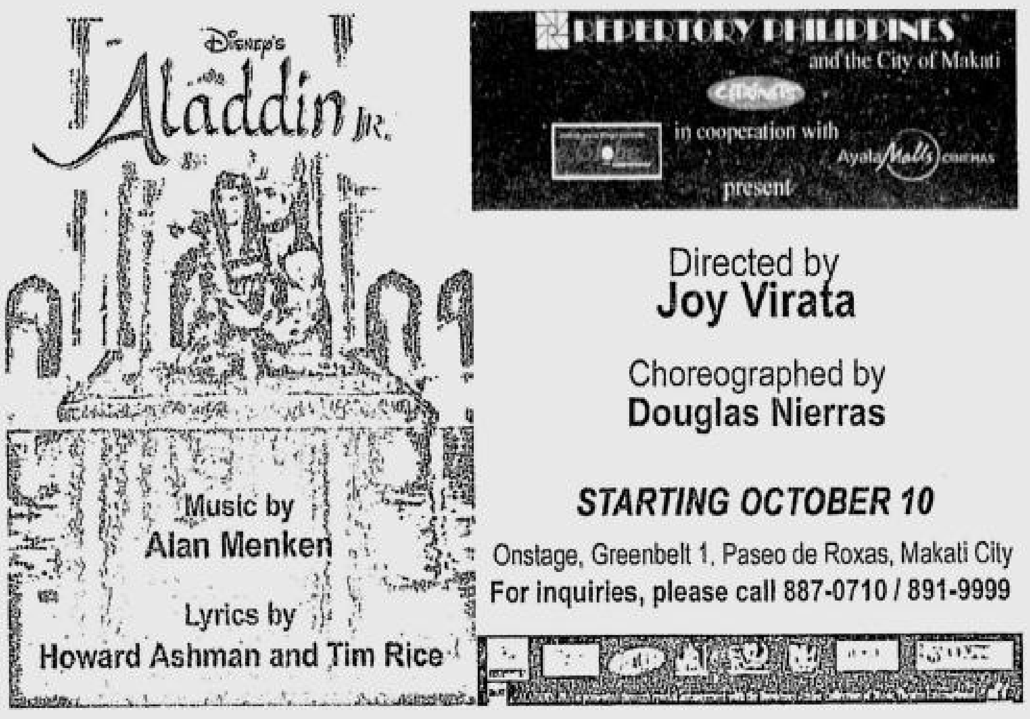
Vendors are donating a portion of their profits to the I Can Serve foundation, an advocacy group that embarks on high-impact information campaigns on breast cancer so that women can have a voice in their own health care, and links women's cancer patient groups in the country.

For more info, call 6873942 or log on to www.icanserve.net

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.



FROM left: CJ Caparas, Sunshine Dizon, Donna Villa, Manoling Morato, Peach Caparas and Carlo Caparas



Disney's Aladdin Jr.

Music by Alan Menken

Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice

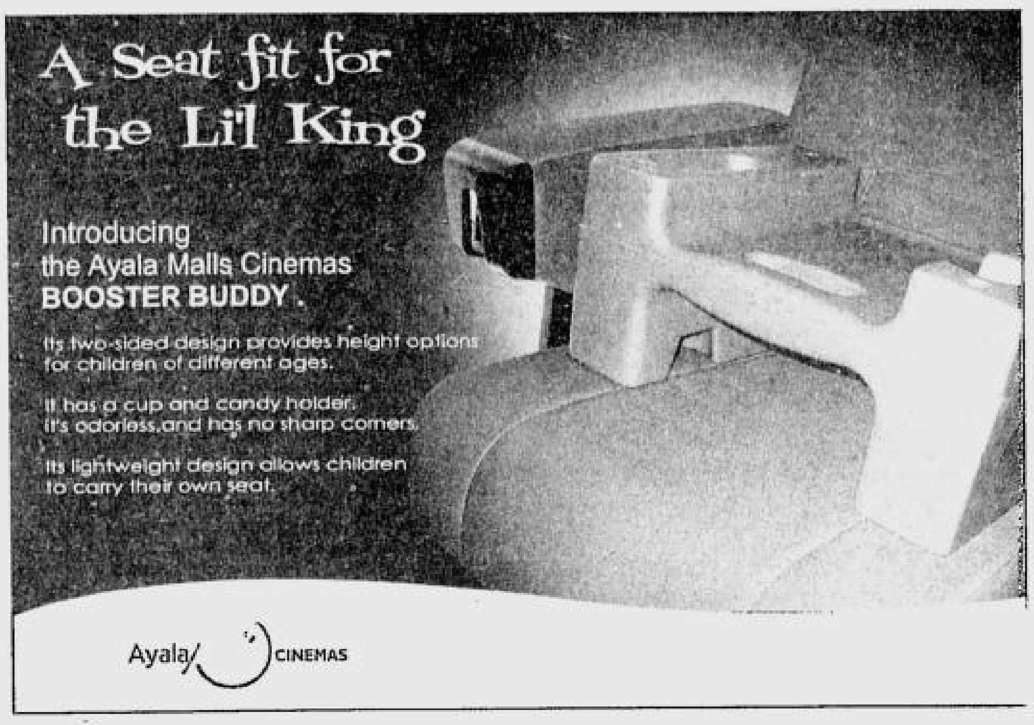
REPERTORY PHILIPPINES and the City of Makati in cooperation with Ayala Malls Cinemas present

Directed by Joy Virata

Choreographed by Douglas Nierras

STARTING OCTOBER 10

Onstage, Greenbelt 1, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
For inquiries, please call 887-0710 / 891-9999



A Seat fit for the Li'l King

Introducing the Ayala Malls Cinemas BOOSTER BUDDY.

Its two-sided design provides height options for children of different ages.

It has a cup and candy holder. It's odorless,and has no sharp corners.

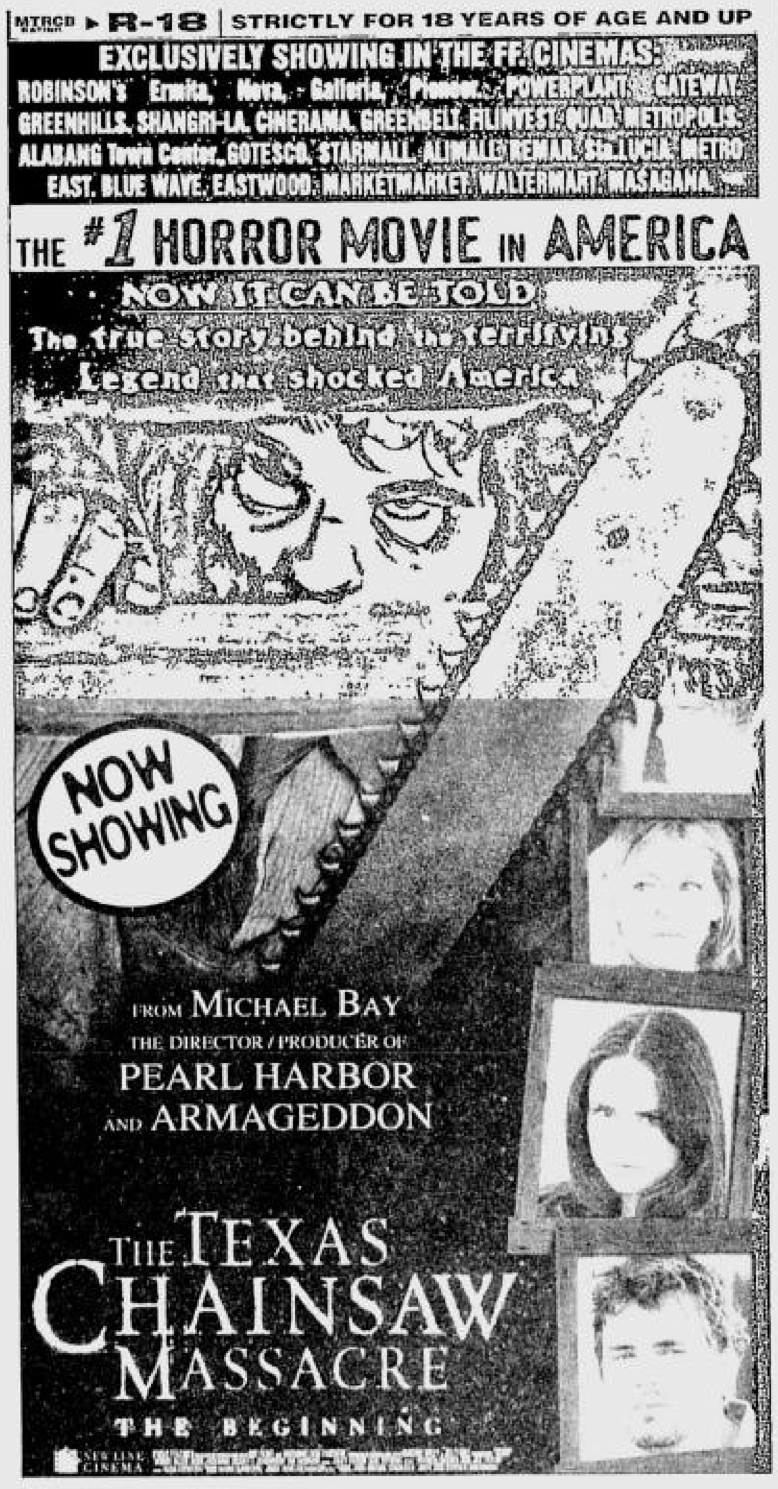
Its lightweight design allows children to carry their own seat.

Ayala Cinemas

The THX experience.
Giving you more than the front seat.
A unique cinematic experience from the largest THX certified theatre operator in the country.
Ayala Malls Cinemas

THX

Ayala Cinemas



MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 | STRICTLY FOR 18 YEARS OF AGE AND UP

EXCLUSIVELY SHOWING IN THE FF. CINEMAS:
ROBINSON'S Ermita, Nova, Galleria, Pioneer, POWERPLANT, GATEWAY, GREENHILLS, SHANGRI-LA, CINERAMA, GREENBELT, FILINVEST, QUAD, METROPOLIS, ALABANG Town Center, GOTESCO, STARMALL, ALIMALL, REMAR, Sta. LUCIA, METRO EAST, BLUE WAVE, EASTWOOD, MARKETMARKET, WALTERMART, MASAGANA.

THE #1 HORROR MOVIE IN AMERICA

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD
The true story behind the terrifying Legend that shocked America

NOW SHOWING

FROM MICHAEL BAY
THE DIRECTOR / PRODUCER OF
PEARL HARBOR AND ARMAGEDDON

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
THE BEGINNING

NEW LINE CINEMA

MTRCB RATING PG-13

WEDDING ADVISORY: A MUST-SEE MOVIE FOR THOSE WHO ARE PLANNING TO GET MARRIED SOON.

The FUNNIEST and CRAZIEST wedding comedy of the year from the company that gave you 'NOTTING HILL'!

To Win Her Heart, He Must Come Up with the Perfect Disguise.

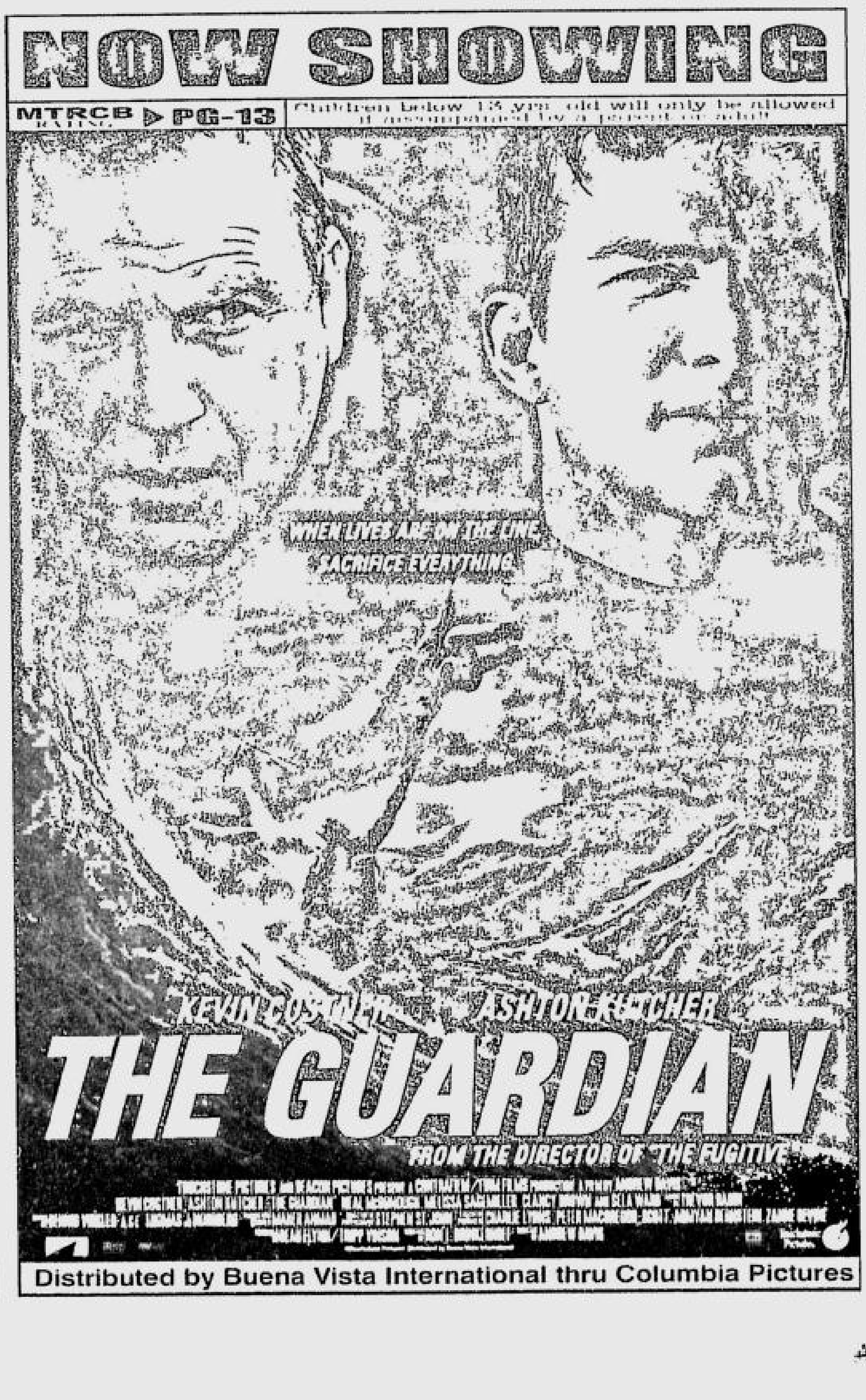
RACHAEL LEIGH COOK (star of "Nancy Drew")

KENNY DOUGHTY (star of "The Great Raid")

NOW SHOWING

my first wedding

LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!



NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

WHEN LIVES ARE ON THE LINE, SACRIFICE EVERYTHING

KEVIN COSTNER ASHTON KUTCHER

THE GUARDIAN

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE FUGITIVE"

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
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1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
THE DEPARTED

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Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 THE DEPARTED
2 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GUARDIAN

starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GUARDIAN
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433984
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 THE PULSE

THEATRES
SNAKE ON THE PLANE
3 TILL I MET YOU
3 ZOOM

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1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 PULSE
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 THE DEPARTED
5 MY FIRST WEDDING
6 THE GUARDIAN
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 DEAD OR ALIVE
9 YOU ME & DUPREE
10 TILL I MET YOU

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 RESERVED

MARKET!MARKET!
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tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE
3 THE WICKER MAN
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TILL I MET YOU

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 THE GUARDIAN
2 POSSESSED BY EVIL
3 THE BREED
4 TILL I MET YOU

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687 6963 or 72
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE DEPARTED
4 TILL I MET YOU

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Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 TILL I MET YOU
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3 SNAKE ON A PLANE
4 RESERVED

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(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE
3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 STEP UP

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 SNAKE ON A PLANE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 POSSESSED BY EVIL
3 TWILIGHT DANCERS
4 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795 3320
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 DEAD OR ALIVE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 FIST DAY HIGH

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 NAKED EYES
3 PERLAS
4 PLEASE CALL

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 WILD ORCHIDS
3 SNAKE ON A PLANE
4 ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
5 THE GUARDIAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 TWILIGHT DANCERS
2 THE WICKER MAN
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 TILL I MET YOU

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 . 879.2029
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED

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ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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GALLERIA 633-6116

1 STEP UP • THX
2 TIL' I MET YOU
3 THE DEPARTED
4 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5 THE GUARDIAN
6 MY FIRST WEDDING
7 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
8 PULSE
9 DEAD OR ALIVE
10 TWILIGHT DANCERS

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 THE DEPARTED
5 MY FIRST WEDDING
6 DEAD OR ALIVE
7 PULSE

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 THE DEPARTED
5 MY FIRST WEDDING
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
7 PULSE
8 STEP UP

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE DEPARTED
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5 PULSE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 THE DEPARTED

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LIPA and BACOLOD

Twilight Dancers offers a disturbing yet humurous look at Philippine social realities through the eyes of three macho dancers. Dwight, young and at the peak of his trade, loses the girl he loves to a politician's son Alfred, at 28, is past his prime and is kicked out of the club when the firm starts. Bert, 30, has long since given up dancing, and is now the bodyguard-driver of a corrupt yet jolly businesswoman, Madame Loca.

starring:
Cherry Pie Picache, Allen Dizon, Lauren Novero and Tyron Perez

MTRCB Rating: R-18
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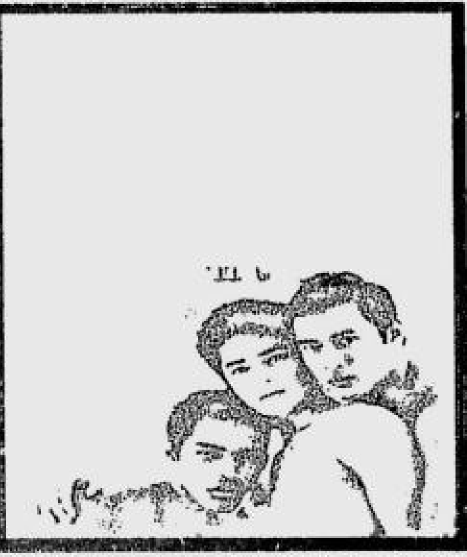

STA. ROSA (049) 837-[illegible]

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 STEP UP
4 DEAD OR ALIVE

LIPA (043) 757-[illegible] (043) 312-5870

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 TWILIGHT DANCERS
3 THE WICKER MAN
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL

DASMARIÑAS (046) 850-[illegible] (046) 416-4332

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE DEPARTED
4 STEP UP

ANGELES (045) 892-234[illegible]

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE BREED
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE DEPARTED
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TIL' I MET YOU
3 THE DEPARTED
4 THE BREED
5 DEAD OR ALIVE
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

BACOLOD (034) 441-0463 (034) 441-0456

1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 TWILIGHT DANCERS
3 SCOOP
4 CRANK
5 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
6 SNAKES ON A PLANE

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1 TIL' I MET YOU
2 FLY BOYS
3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
4 THE BREED

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October 15 (Sunday) 11:30 am • 2:30 pm

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IMAX
T-REX
11:00AM 12:30PM 2:00PM
3:00PM 8:00PM 9.30
SUPERMAN RETURNS
5:30PM Admission Price- P350
1 DEAD OR ALIVE
2 PULSE
3 THE DEPARTED
4 MY FIRST WEDDING
step up
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
PREMIERE CINEMA
TILL I MET YOU
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
THE GUARDIAN
CENTERSTAGE
BARNYARD
CINEMA 1
THE GUARDIAN
CINEMA 2
THE DEPARTED
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 STEP UP
4 THE DEPARTED
5 DEAD OR ALIVE
THE BREED
THE GUARDIAN
8 TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
MY FIRST WEDDING
PULSE
THE DEPARTED

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
THE GUARDIAN
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 JOSEPH THE DREAMER
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
8 STEP UP
9 THE BREED
10 TILL I MET YOU
11 PULSE
12 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE BREED
3 STEP UP
PULSE
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
THE DEPARTED
10 DEAD OR ALIVE
FLY BOYS
ZOOM

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
THE GUARDIAN
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE DEPARTED
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
STEP UP
THE BREED
ZOOM
PULSE
DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
THE GUARDIAN
PULSE
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE DEPARTED
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
TILL I MET YOU
2 PULSE
3 MY FIRST WEDDING
4 THE GUARDIAN
5 STEP UP
6 ZOOM
7 THE DEPARTED
8 DEAD OR ALIVE
9 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE
4 THE DEPARTED

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
POSSESSED BY EVIL
MY FIRST WEDDING
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE DEPARTED
FLY BOYS
THE GUARDIAN
FIRST DAY HIGH
8 THE BREED
TILL I MET YOU
10 PULSE
STEP UP
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
THE DEPARTED
4 STEP UP

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE

Event Calendar

SHOWTIME

CREATIVE XCHANGE presents

Rex Navarrete

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October 20, 2006 • 8:30 pm

MEGAMALL Cinema 10

Tickets at

Orch. Center	P800	Balc. Center	P500
Orch. Sides	P500	Balc. Sides	P300

Tickets available at TICKETWORLD 891-9999, Creative Exchange at 722-4757 or 722-7223

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE GUARDIAN
DEAD OR ALIVE
PULSE
TILL I MET YOU
THE DEPARTED
MY FIRST WEDDING

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
THE GUARDIAN
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
FLY BOYS
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
WICKER MAN
TILL I MET YOU
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
THE GUARDIAN
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
FLY BOYS
DEAD OR ALIVE
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY LIPA
SCOOP
TILL I MET YOU
WICKER MAN
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
TILL I MET YOU
STEP UP
YOU,ME AND DUPREE
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
TILL I MET YOU
DEAD OR ALIVE
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
THE GUARDIANS

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
STEP UP
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
THE DEPARTED
THE GUARDIAN
FLY BOY
SCOOP
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
THE BREED

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
THE BREED
2 RESERVE
3 WICKER MAN
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 TILL I MET YOU
6 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
7 RESERVED
8 FLY BOYS

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
THE DEPARTED
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
TILL I MET YOU
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
6 FLY BOYS

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
DEAD OR ALIVE
TILL I MET YOU
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
THE BREED

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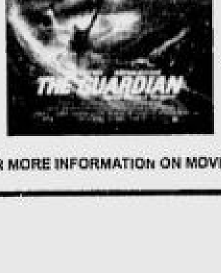
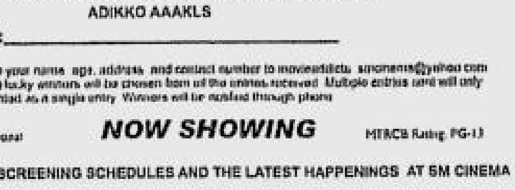
movietime PROMO

Watch and Win at SM Cinema





Here's your chance to win The Guardian towels, bags, and watches from Buena Vista International!

Simply arrange the scrambled letters below to form the answer:

Where did Jake Fischer (Ashton Kutcher) go after graduation?
ADIKKO AAAKLS

Answer:______________________

Send in your answers together with your name, age, address and contact number to moviedaddicts_smcinema@yahoo.com on or before October 17. Ten (10) lucky winners will be chosen from all the entries received. Multiple entries sent will only be counted as a single entry. Winners will be notified through phone.

Distributed by Buena Vista International

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

ROUNDUP

3-D movie

COLUMBIA PICtures' animated adventure comedy "Open Season" will be shown in 3-D format at the IMAX Theater at the SM Mall of Asia on Oct. 25, simultaneous with the movie's opening in theaters nationwide.

In the film, Boog (Martin Lawrence) is a domesticated grizzly bear with no survival skills, whose perfect world is turned upside down when he meets Elliot (Ashton Kutcher), a scrawny, fast-talking mule deer.

With IMAX 3-D, viewers will duck for cover as acorns fly overhead and feel the roller-coaster-like thrill of going over waterfalls.

Ice champ

In "Ice Princess," brainy Casey Carlyle (Michelle Trachtenberg) has never quite fit in. Her strong-willed mother (Joan Cusack) has Casey on the fast track to Harvard, which goes against her fantasy of becoming a championship figure skater.

She can only hope to be like the three elite skating prodigies who are ruthlessly competing on the US Figure Skating court.

Directed by Tim Fywell, the movie airs on Oct. 20, 21, 26, 30 and 31, 9 p.m. on Star Movies.

Sea drama

"Open Water," Chris Kentis' realistic deep-sea drama based on true events, proves that the power of imagination is more terrifying than what meets the eye.

The story tells of a bickering married couple, Americans Daniel (Daniel Travis) and Susan (Blanchard Ryan), who have been abandoned in the middle of the Caribbean by a crowded scuba-diving boat. Cold, alone, and miles from land, it only gets worse when the sea-life just below the surface reveal themselves to be sharks.

Airing on Oct. 15, 9 p.m. on Star Movies, with replays on Oct. 16, 27 and 28.

Martial arts

In "Fight Science," National Geographic Channel explores the science of martial arts disciplines and their weapons using cutting-edge technology on Oct. 27 at 4 p.m.

In this episode, undefeated professional boxer and fight trainer Steve Petramale proves the legendary one punch knock-out real as he delivers a stunning 993-pound blow to the head of the dummy, equal to driving a sledgehammer to the face.

Muay Thai world champion Melchor Menor also proves the legendary knockout from a single kick true as he drives a deadly strike kick to the crash test dummy's sternum.

Two bits from Orange and Lemons

NU 107 ROCK Awards' 2005 Artist of the Year Orange and Lemons captivates the ears and hearts of Pinoy music lovers with two simultaneous blockbusters—"Let Me," the commercial jingle for Unilever's Sunsilk Soft Touch promotions and "Yakap sa Dilim," the first single from the double-platinum certified Apo Hiking Society tribute album, "KaminAPO" from Universal Records.

Orange and Lemons performs live Mondays of October at Tavern on the Square, 2nd level, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City.

The band will be at LA Café in Malate today; at the Flotunes Launch in Eastwood Central Plaza tomorrow, 7 p.m.; and in San Miguel Super Dry Bar Tour-Manila DJ Club in Greenhills on Oct. 14.

For booking inquiries, call 09193970130.

SHOW TIME

ARANETA CENTER

Gateway Ali MALL Farmers Plaza

THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY
Gateway CINEPLEX*10
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

TILL I MET YOU
12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40

TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 9:50

THE GUARDIAN
1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50

PULSE
1:30 / 3:35 / 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50

THE DEPARTED
12:10 / 3:20 / 6:30 / 9:40

TALLADEGA NIGHTS
7:00 / 9:30

MY FIRST WEDDING
1:40 / 3:40 / 5:40 / 7:40 / 9:40

FIRST DAY HIGH
2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30

DEAD OR ALIVE
1:00 / 3:00 / 5:00

THE GUARDIAN
12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

TILL I MET YOU
12:10 R3 / 1:45 / 4:00 / 6:15 / 8:30

THE GUARDIAN
12:10 R3 / 2:20 / 5:10 / 8:00

TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2:00 R3 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05 / 8:20

DEAD OR ALIVE
12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00

MY FIRST WEDDING
12:40 / 2:40 / 4:40 / 5:40 / 8:40

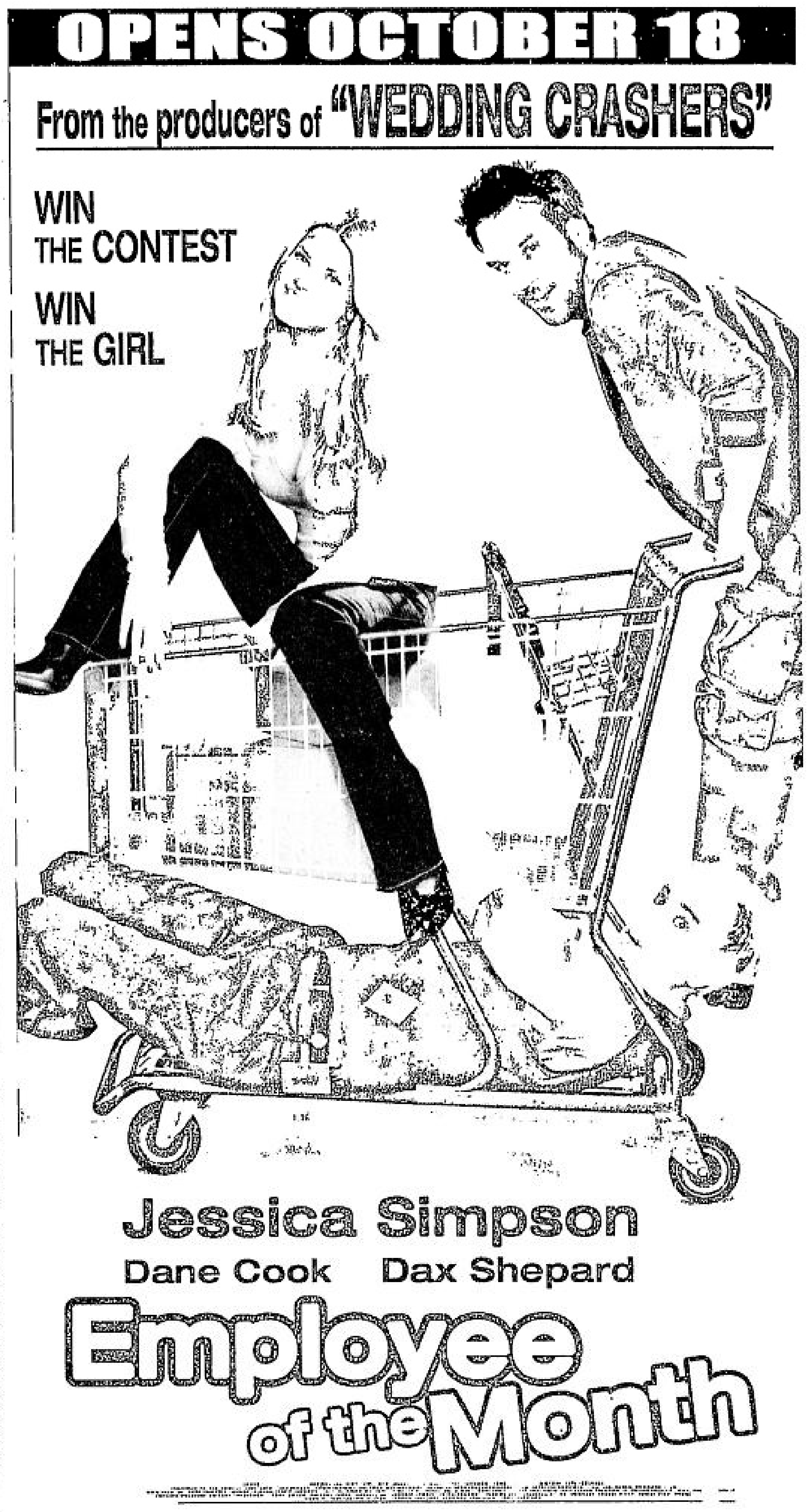
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

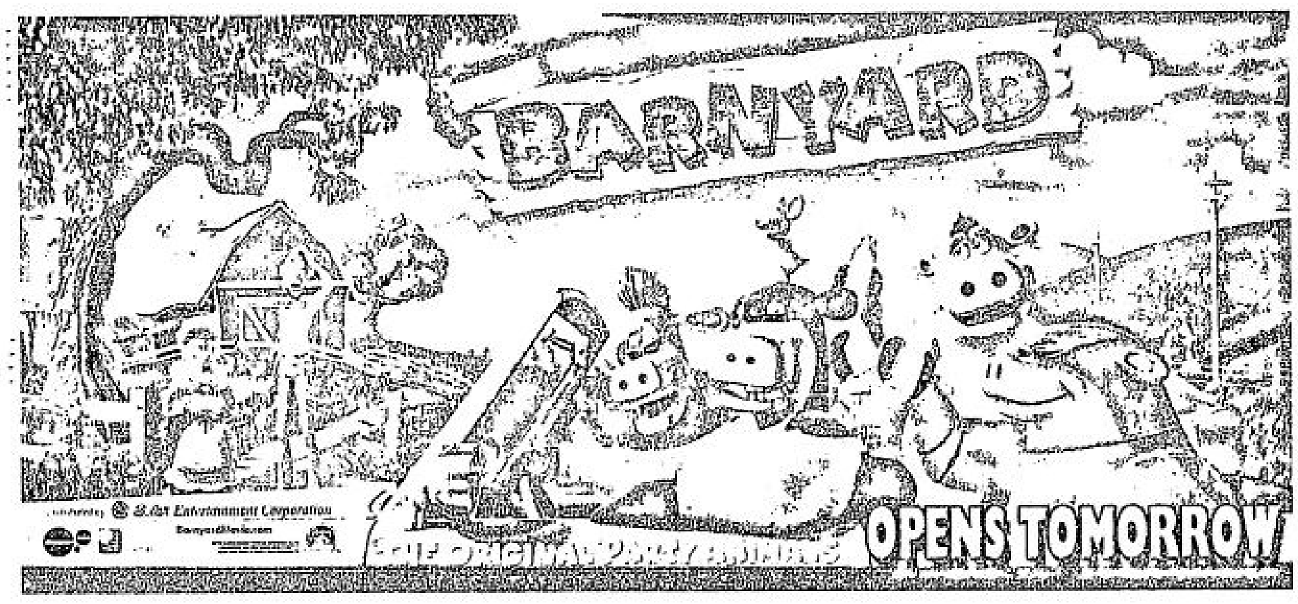
For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM

TWENTY - REGINE VELASQUEZ CONCERT !
October 13 & 14, Friday & Saturday - 8 pm

WWE SMACKDOWN SURVIVOR SERIES TOUR !
October 21, Sat. 6 pm & October 22, Sun. 4 pm


OPENS OCTOBER 18
From the producers of "WEDDING CRASHERS"
WIN THE CONTEST
WIN THE GIRL
Jessica Simpson
Dane Cook
Dax Shepard
Employee of the Month


BARNYARD
THE ORIGINAL PARTY ANIMALS
OPENS TOMORROW

glorietta · ALABANG TOWN · AYALA CENTER CEBU · MARKET! MARKET! · Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777.

G1	1 MY FIRST WEDDING	2 THE GUARDIAN	3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	4 TILL I MET YOU
G4	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 THX CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 PULSE	5 THE DEPARTED	6 THE GUARDIAN	7 TILL I MET YOU
GB1	1 STEP-UP	2 TILL I MET YOU		
GB3	1 THX PELICULA: 5TH SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE GUARDIAN GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 GREEN STREET HOOLIGANS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE GUARDIAN GUARANTEED SEATS	2 TILL I MET YOU		
	3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	4 PULSE	5 THE DEPARTED	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE GUARDIAN	2 TILL I MET YOU	3 FLYBOYS	4 THE DEPARTED
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE DEPARTED	2 TILL I MET YOU		
	3 THE GUARDIAN	4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853, from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Anson's Exhibit October 5 to 21, 2006	Federal Hardware Exhibit Oct. 6 to 11, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	**MARKET! MARKET!**
Culminating Activity Sign Language Association of Cebu October 8, 2006	Call Center Job Fair October 6 to 7, 2006

GREENBELT — Cathay Pacific's Planes Exhibit
October 6 to 12

Greenbelt Onstage — Repertory Philippines presents
THE BOOR & THE PROPOSAL
at REP's Globe Theater - September 16 to October 8, 2006
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM — Homecoming of 21st Asian International Art Exhibition Philippines
September 19 to October 1, 2006
For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

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Ayala Malls CINEMAS
NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS
GREEN STREET HOOLIGANS
GET READY TO KICK ASS!
BEST OF FESTIVAL FEATURE JURY AWARD MALIBU INT'L FILMFEST 2005
WINNER OF THE SXSW JURY AND AUDIENCE AWARDS FOR BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2005 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL
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BIG BUDDHA RESTAURANT
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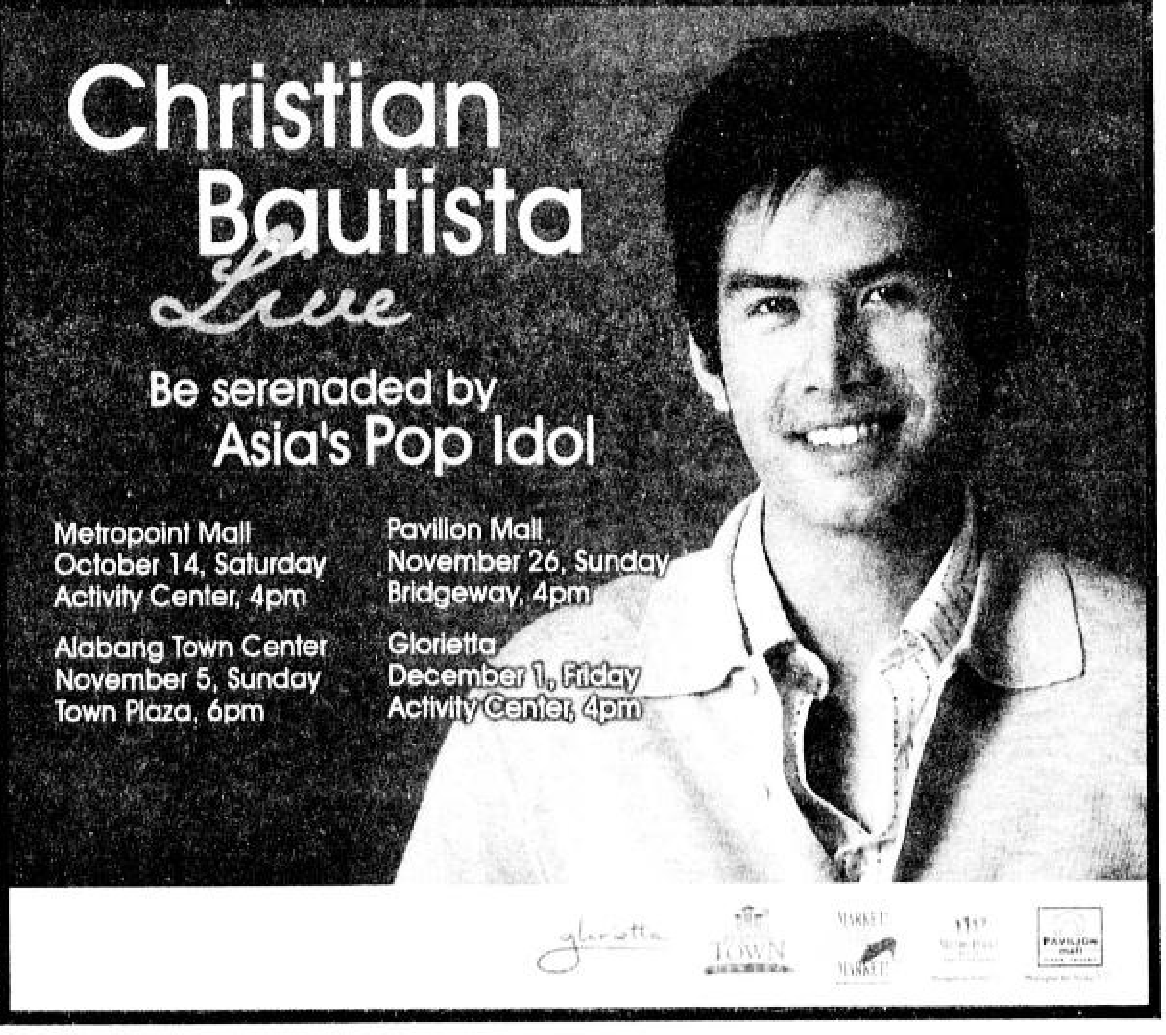
GREENBELT


Christian Bautista Live
Be serenaded by Asia's Pop Idol
Metropoint Mall
October 14, Saturday
Activity Center, 4pm
Alabang Town Center
November 5, Sunday
Town Plaza, 6pm
Pavilion Mall
November 26, Sunday
Bridgeway, 4pm
Glorietta
December 1, Friday
Activity Center, 4pm
glorietta
TOWN
MARKET! MARKET!
PAVILION mall

A teen flick—plus

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE RECENTLY watched "First Day High" to see how the young stars in its cast fared as new thespians. Among the male leads, **Jason Abalos** came off best of all. He wasn't the most compelling actor in the group, but he was the most natural—and in the movies, that's a plus.

Geoff Eigenmann is a more intense performer, but his portrayal was compromised by his age and relative bulk. He's still young, but his co-stars appear to be years younger—and they're slimmer, too.

This really isn't the actor's fault, but is more an error in comparative casting. As a result, Geoff had to be photographed in the half-dark in many scenes, to minimize his "bulk problem," particularly when he appeared with his leaner co-stars.

Gerald Anderson is the best looker in the group, but he's also the newest talent. Still, he evinces a shy appeal that's rather fetching. But he should really hone his acting chops fast before he shoots his next starrer.

Compared to the male leads, the film's young female stars are not as strong. In fact, they're sometimes upstaged by some vivid and *kikay* supporting actresses!

But **Maja Salvador** has a standout scene in which she gets drunk and dances up a silly storm. She really does look silly as she gyrates and shimmies for all she's worth, so she wins points for her readiness to make a "fool" of herself.

There's too much *porma* acting in local teen flicks, so we really do need more talents like Maja who are willing to *not* look good to do justice to an acting moment.

"First Day High" is "only" a teen flick, but its young director, **Mario Cornejo**, is able to add elements to the fluffy production to make it more vibrant and substantial.

Its visuals energize its wafer-thin tale about school life, love and a smidgen of intrigue. It's fluffy, but entertainingly so.

The production design plays around with colors, so the movie's images are the height of eye candy.

To be sure, the place that the film's giddy characters inhabit doesn't look at all like the country the rest of us call home, but realism appears to be the least of this production's priorities.

Happily, however, sense and sensibility are not as alien to this movie. While generally remaining giddy, the film is still able to share some insights that could serve young viewers in good stead, *if* they're inclined to listen.

Albeit in the lightest of ways, "First Day High" encourages young people to help each other, to be their own persons, to value what their parents have done for them, to own up to their mistakes, and to relate to each other.

Yes, "First Day High" is a lightweight teen flick, but these and other extra inputs make it more than "just" that.

'Rhythm and Blues'

ON OCT. 13, "Rhythm and Blues" at the Music Museum brings together four talented artists in a concert produced by **Gina de la Rama** and **Cynthia Ibay-Esguerra** and with **Gus Aldeguer** directing.

Aiza Seguerra, Geneva Cruz, Jay-R and **True Faith** will each display their expertise in their particular genre, with songs audiences have come to associate with them. Call 525-4384.

A TRUE STORY OF COURAGE AND SURVIVAL
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
NICOLAS CAGE
WORLD TRADE CENTER
AN OLIVER STONE FILM
IN THEATERS OCTOBER 18
united international pictures
Distributed by Solar Entertainment Corporation

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THE MOST-AWAITED ROMANTIC MOVIE OF THE YEAR!
Robin Padilla Regine Velasquez
" It was entertaining, poignant, and romantic. Nakalimutan ko ang problema ng Pilipinas ng dalawang oras." - LOREN LEGARDA, Senator
" Naiyak ako sa surprise ending." - GIRLIE RODIZ, Talent Manager
Mall Tour: SM Bicutan - Oct. 15, 4PM
i never knew what love was...
Till i met you
A film by Mark A. Reyes (dgpi)
Text TILL to 4627 for Smart and Talk 'N Text
NOW SHOWING
Pancit Canton

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 THE GUARDIAN MTRCB PG-13 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS MTRCB R-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
3 TILL I MET YOU MTRCB GP 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE MTRCB R 18 1:05, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE THE DEPARTED MTRCB R-13 12:30, 3:40, 6:50, 10:00
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Catch the Cineplex Special
MONDAY AND TUESDAY SPECIALS
On Mondays and Tuesdays, starting August 14, enjoy special prices of P99.00 for Cinemas 1-4,P120 for the Premiere Theatre (exclusive of food and drinks)
Not applicable to selected movies, on holidays, sneak previews and and in conjunction w/ other Shang Cineplex discounts and promos.
Specials last until Nov. 14, 2006. See posters and flyers for details
[illegible]
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 for more details.
Shangri-La Plaza

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

THE DEPARTED R13 2:10,5:10,8:10	MY FIRST WEDDING 1:25,3:35,5.45, 7:55;10:05	THE DEPARTED R13 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30
THE GUARDIAN PG13 1:35,4:25,7:15,10:05	THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING 2:00,4:00,6:00, 8:00,10:00	THE GUARDIAN PG13 2:00,4:50,7:40,10:30

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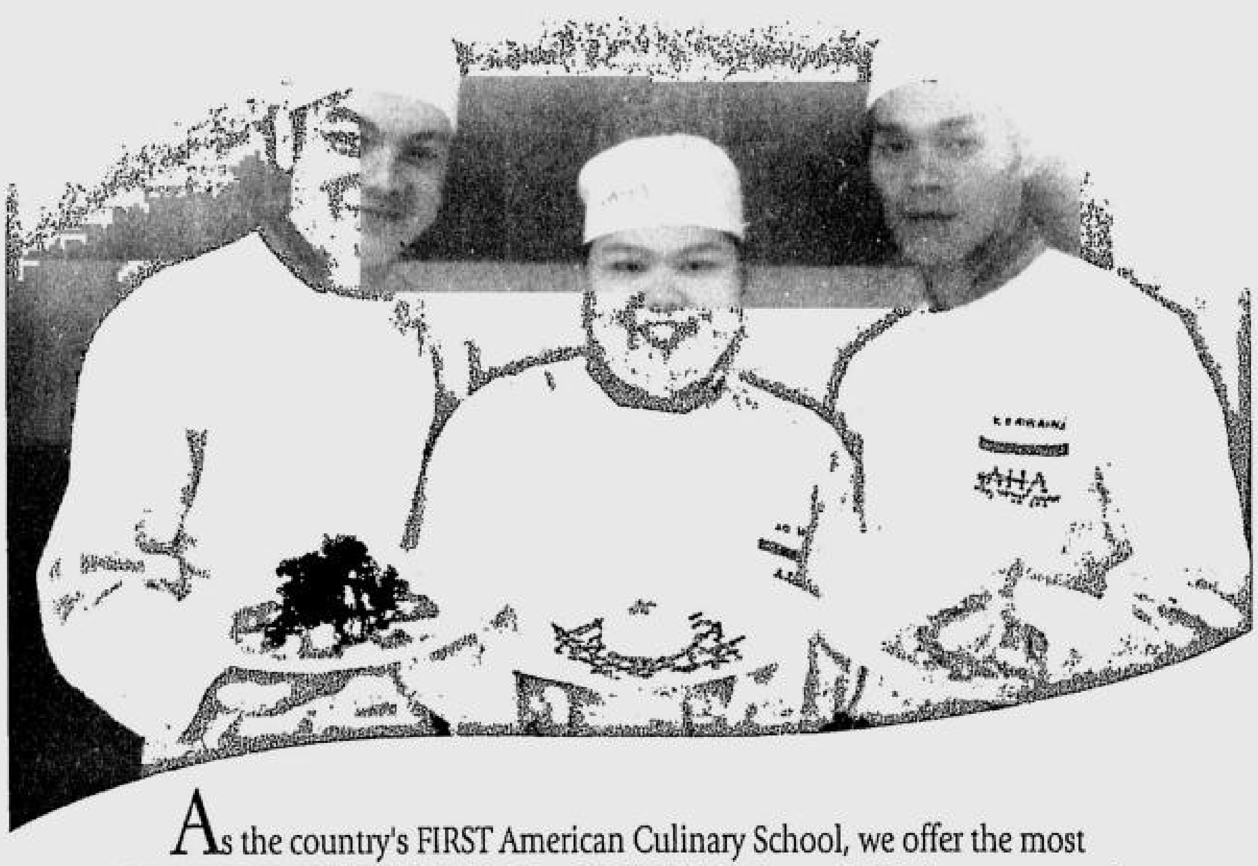
3	THE DEPARTED	1:55, 5:05, 8:15, 11:15	R-13
4	TILL I MET YOU	1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	G



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BUSINESS FRIDAY / B2-1

What Steve Jobs, Jack Welch, Bill Gates, Lee Iacocca have in common

NEWS/ A13

If you have paraskevidekatriaphobia, stay home today

WORLD / A27

Johns Hopkins U study says 655,000 Iraqis killed since 2003

ENTERTAINMENT / H1

PDI man in Hollywood to visit the 'Queen' and the set of 'Harry Potter 5'

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
ANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
r 13, 2006 ★★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 307 P18 website: www.inq7.net

US students turn to e-tutors in Asia

GALING TALAGA NG PINOY!

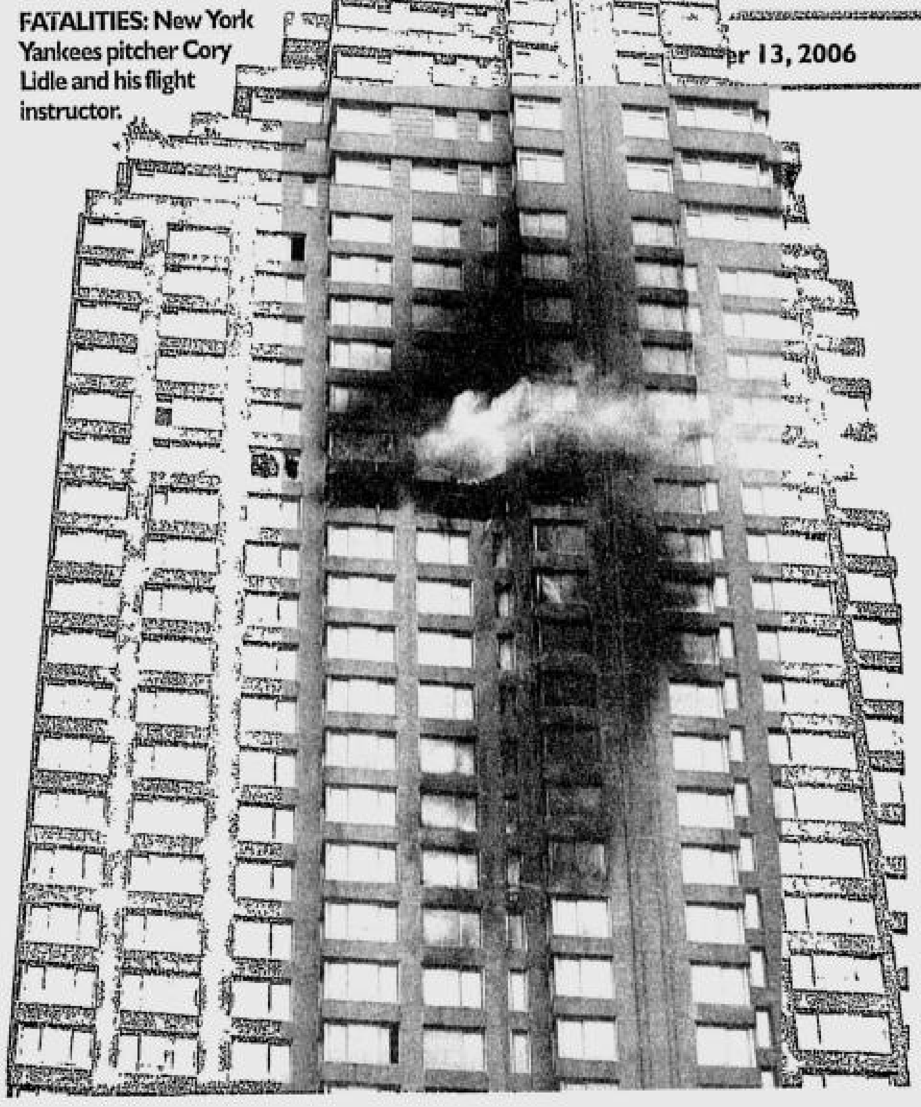
WASHINGTON—AMERICAN students having trouble with pesky math equations or intricate English grammar are increasingly turning to tutors in Asian countries, including the Philippines, for help with their homework.

The tutors are part of a

US STUDENTS/ A23

REUTERS/AP

FATALITIES: New York Yankees pitcher Cory Lidle and his flight instructor.



WITH 9/11 ON THEIR MIND, New Yorkers were stunned to see smoke streaming out of the windows of a 52-story condo in Manhattan after a small aircraft crashed into it on Thursday.

17 test review execs charged

But NBI lauds PRC for acting on leak

By Armand N. Nocum and Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU of Investigation yesterday filed a complaint against 17 executives of three review centers suspected of involvement in the leak of test questions in the nursing licensure examination but it said the pattern indicated that cheating had been practiced in the annual exercise for years.

The NBI named Professional Regulation Commission Chair Leonor Tripon-Rosero as the official complainant in the case for violation of provisions of Republic Act No. 8981, or the PRC Modernization Act. The complaint filed with the Department of Justice did not include the examinees who had benefited from the leak.

Those indicted were Ricarte A. Gapuz, Evangeline Gapuz, Ma. Elena Altarejos, Elizabeth G. Iciano and Eleanor Artemia Cruz of the R.A. Gapuz Review Center; George C. Cordero, Adela C. Cordero, Jerry C. Cordero, Corazon C. Sabado, Macjohn C. Fabian, Lolita C. Barlahan and Eugenia A. Alcantara of the Inress Review Center, and Gerald Andamo, lawyer Glenn Luansing, Mike Jimenes, Jerome Balisnomo and Freddie Valdez of the Pentagon Review Specialist Inc.

Earlier in the day, Rosero said of the results of the NBI inquiry: "I'm glad these things came out, but I want them to name names.

"If there are nurses among the owners of [the involved] review centers, [the PRC] can file administrative charges against them."

Instead of charging PRC officials, the NBI lauded them for the "recomputation" that included invalidating the leaked questions in Test III and reducing the weight of the scores in Test V.

The bureau said this was "a sensible solution to downgrade the effects of the leakages."

"If the highest officers of the [three] review centers were too daring to pull

17 TEST/ A8

Makati set to fight Palace plan to get Binay

By Tarra V. Quismundo

MAKATI CITY HALL IS BATTENing down to protect embattled Mayor Jejomar Binay from any attempt to enforce an anticipated Malacañang suspension order for allegedly maintaining "ghost employees" on the payroll.

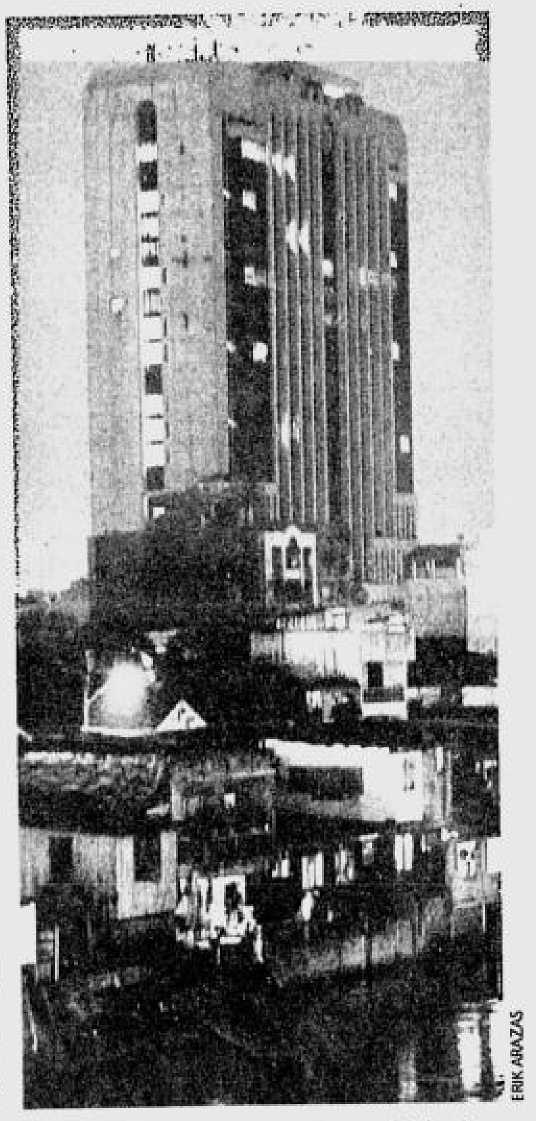
Officials said it was "business as usual" but that was not what it appeared in the 22-story building.

Employees were not in uniform. One said he and his colleagues just unanimously agreed to have a "wash day."

The usually open rear entrance was closed and walled in with galvanized iron sheets. Shutters were pulled down over the glass-paneled ground floor offices. None of the seven elevators went all the way up to mayor's office on the 21st floor of the spanking new edifice.

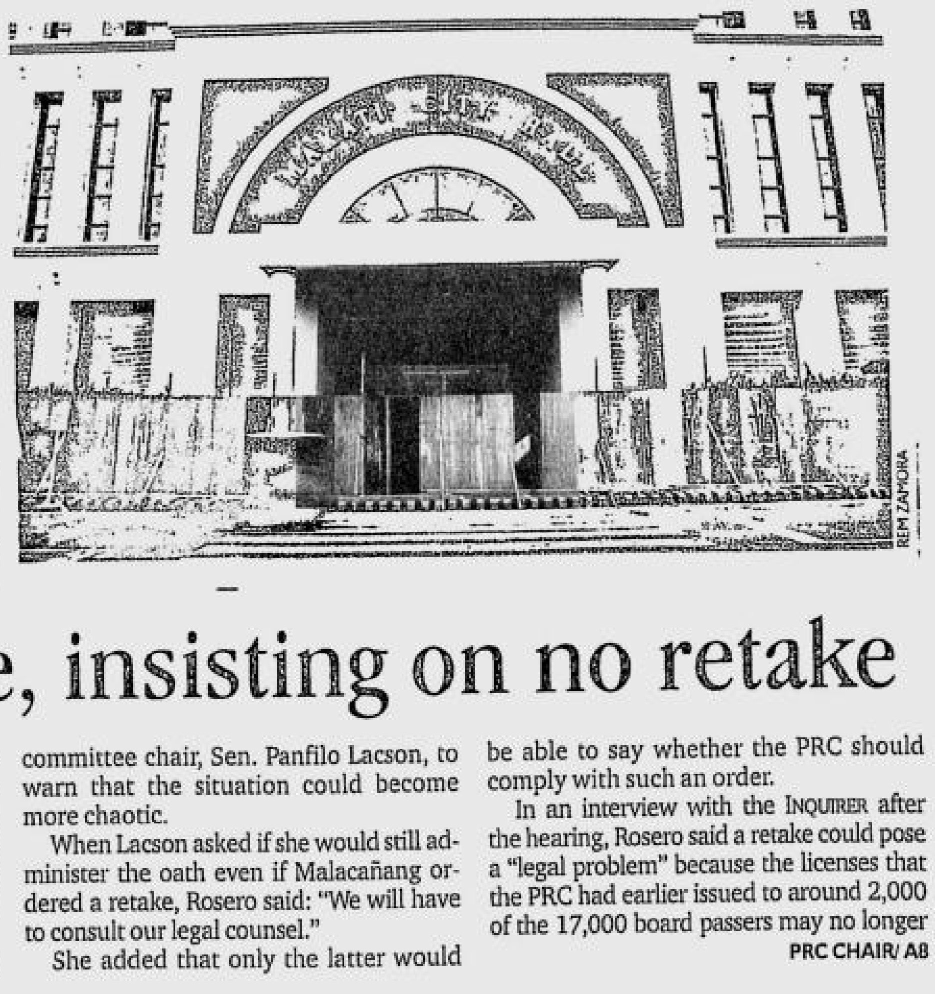
"We are on high alert," said a security officer at a sealed fire exit.

MAKATI/ A23



ERIK ARAZAS

BINAY'S BASTION: The 22-story Makati City Hall (above) is now a virtual fortress to protect Mayor Binay from anyone out to serve a Palace suspension order.



REM ZAMORA

New Yorkers think 9/11 as plane hits high-rise

NEW YORK—DIANE TARANTINI WAS early for her appointment and waiting on the street when she heard a loud whistling noise, then almost immediately a deafening crash in the apartment block towering above her. *(See related story in Sports, Page A32.)*

"I looked up and saw a flash," the 39-year-old said. She watched in horror as burning chunks of debris started falling to the ground and flames and smoke billowed from the gaping hole gouged in the 52-story building above her.

Like many New Yorkers, her first thoughts turned to five years before, when the city's landmark Twin Towers were hit by two passenger jets, in an attack that instantly changed thousands of lives in the city, the country and beyond.

And while it was soon clear this was no large passenger jet and no repeat of the Sept. 11, 2001, al-Qaida attacks which killed nearly 3,000, the stubborn fears lingered.

Chris Foege, a sales rep who lives just a few blocks away, was walking past the building when the plane hit, sending off flames from four windows.

"I just stood there in shock, I thought 'this can't be happening to us again," she said. "It was like 9/11 all over again."

While a blackened heap of the plane smoldered on the ground, some 30 floors above her, acrid black smoke drifted into Manhattan from the gutted apartments on the swanky Upper East Side block that boasts million-dollar price tags and dramatic views across the East River.

Witnesses all recounted hearing a

NEW YORKERS/ A10

Royal Australian Navy brings fun to cancer-stricken kids

By Jocelyn R. Uy

IN HER YELLOW SUNDRESS, 13-YEAR-old Clarenze Junio looked radiant despite her recent confinement in a hospital for her sixth chemotherapy cycle.

Clarenze said that during her stay at the hospital, she forced herself to eat even if she felt nauseous so that she would be well enough to attend the party that volunteers from the visiting Royal Australian Navy hosted on Tuesday for the children and teenagers of the Cancer Warriors Foundation Inc. (CWFI).

The nonprofit CWFI, founded by cancer survivor James Auste, is composed of young volunteers who help cancer patients get treatment and other support services through solicitations and fund-raising projects. It was founded on Auste's conviction that "no Filipino child will suffer a diminished quality of life because of cancer."

"I've missed a lot of parties because I've been too sick, but I don't want to miss this one anymore," Clarenze told the INQUIRER the other day.

A protective mask covered almost half of her small face, a white scarf concealed her balding head, and a pair of crutches helped her to walk.

She had lost her left leg in March,

ROYAL/ A23

Turk wins Nobel for literature

ANKARA—TURKISH OFFICIALS AND literary circles were abuzz with pride and joy Thursday after Orhan Pamuk, a political dissident who has often clashed with the establishment, won the 2006 Nobel Literature prize, becoming the first Turk to win the coveted award.

"I am very happy and I congratulate him," Mustafa Isen, the Turkish culture ministry's undersecretary, told the NTV television news channel.

"We congratulate writer Orhan Pamuk ... for winning the Nobel Prize and wish him further literary success," the Turkish foreign ministry said.

TURK WINS/ A23

PRC chair to defy Palace, insisting on no retake

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE CHAIR OF THE PROFESSIONAL Regulation Commission is hanging tough on her decision to administer the oath and issue licenses to nursing board passers when the temporary restraining order of the Court of Appeals expires on Oct. 18.

"As soon as the TRO lapses, we will administer the oath to the board passers. Our position is no retake," Leonor Tripon-Rosero yesterday told the Senate committee on civil service looking into the cheating that had marked the nursing licensure examination.

Her hardline stance prompted the committee chair, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, to warn that the situation could become more chaotic.

When Lacson asked if she would still administer the oath even if Malacañang ordered a retake, Rosero said: "We will have to consult our legal counsel."

She added that only the latter would be able to say whether the PRC should comply with such an order.

In an interview with the INQUIRER after the hearing, Rosero said a retake could pose a "legal problem" because the licenses that the PRC had earlier issued to around 2,000 of the 17,000 board passers may no longer

PRC CHAIR/ A8

GMA widens probe of electricity spot market

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas
Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Abigail L. Ho

AN ECONOMIC ADVISER OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has accused state firms National Power Corp. and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), and Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), of involvement in price manipulation, even as she vowed yesterday to go after power utilities allegedly involved in price gouging in the electricity spot market, calling the practice unacceptable.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda noted that spot market prices surged to P6.88 per kilowatt hour three weeks ago.

Before that the average price of power in the spot market's third month (Aug. 26 to Sept. 25) was P4.853 per kWh, nearly 75 percent higher than the P2.788 in the first month, according to the operator of the new Philippine wholesale electricity spot market. The spot market opened in late June.

"They should not go unpunished if culpability is established," the President told delegates to the Liga ng Barangay National Convention at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel.

Ms Arroyo said she had instructed the

GMA WIDENS/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2006

Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

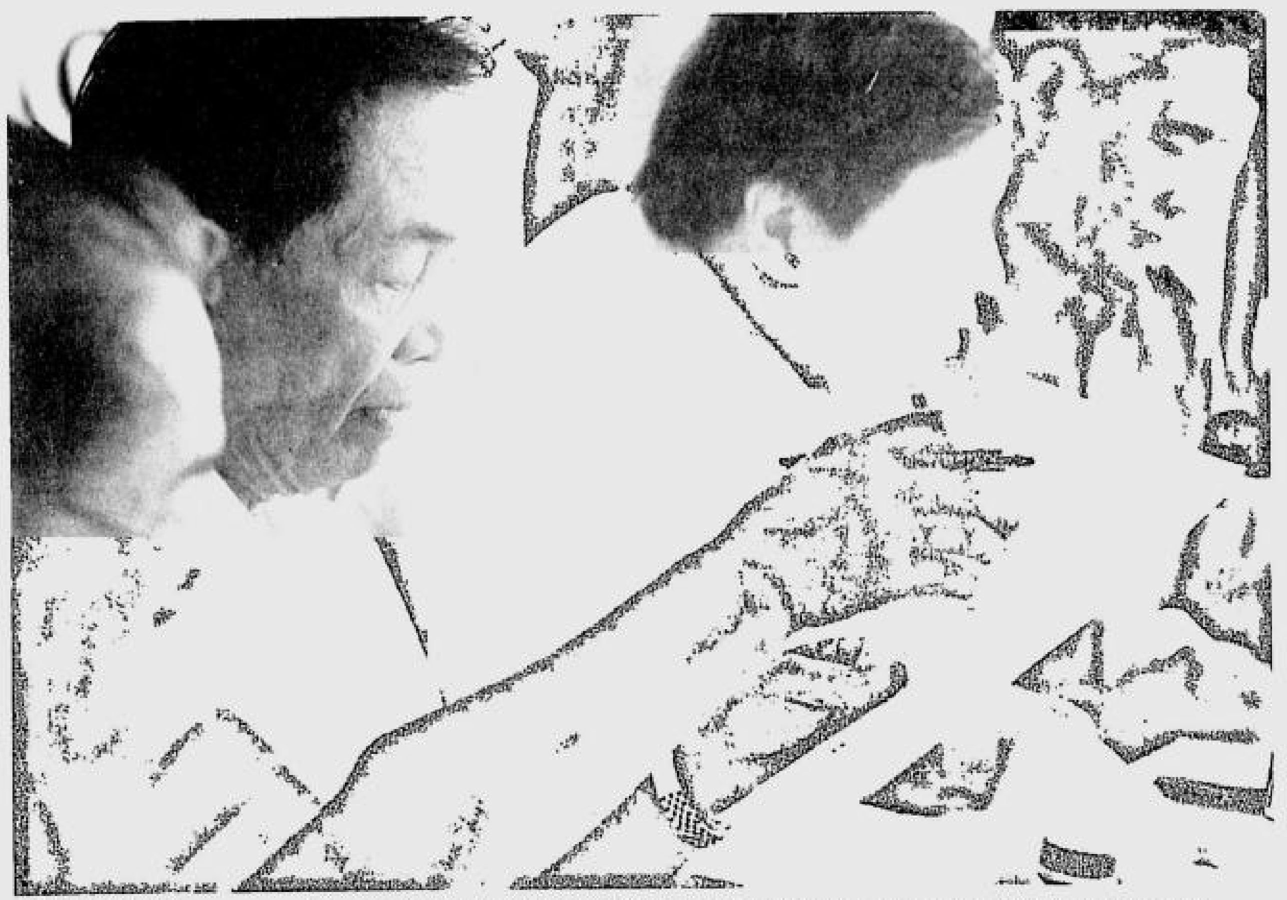
FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the eastern sections. Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/10/12/06

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

It's goodbye to 'Hello Garci'



THE ARMED Forces agreed to a vastly limited role in future elections with the signing of an agreement with the Commission on Elections yesterday. At the signing ceremonies were (from left): Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr., Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz and AFP Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon. EDWIN BACASMAS

By Alcuin Papa

IS IT GOODBYE TO "HELLO GARCI" AT LAST?

The military establishment thinks so as the military's role in future elections, starting with the 2007 polls, will be greatly diminished following the signing of an agreement yesterday with the Commission on Elections.

Under the agreement, military personnel will no longer take part in the counting and canvassing of votes, choosing precincts, transporting ballot boxes and carrying election material and results, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said yesterday.

Their role will be limited to security patrols, manning checkpoints, responding to "serious armed threats" and enforcing the gun ban, Cruz told reporters.

"This is a big step toward the insulation of the Armed Forces from politics," Cruz said.

Also gone are the days when ballots are counted inside military camps.

"That [Hello Garci] will never happen again," Cruz said.

The "Hello Garci" tapes were wiretapped conversations that opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo released to the public last year in which Ms Arroyo and former election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano could be heard allegedly planning to rig the 2004 vote.

The President publicly apologized, admitting that she called a poll official but not to cheat. Her popularity plummeted but she managed to survive two impeachment complaints and an attempted coup in February.

In the tapes, four military generals were named as having helped carry out the alleged fraud. They were retired Generals Francisco Gudani, Roy Kyamko and Gabriel Habacon and the Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon.

A special military commission that investigated the allegations earlier this year cleared Esperon and the other officers but admitted there were "certain lapses in procedure" in deputizing military personnel for election work.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos was similarly eager to see the last of "Hello Garci."

"Garci is gone, there will be no more Garci," he said during the signing of the agreement.

"What we have is 'Hello, Brawnie,'" he said jokingly, referring to Romeo Brawner, one of the newly appointed Comelec commissioners.

Abalos said he felt sorry for the military that it "has been dragged into this mess."

Esperon, who also witnessed the signing, said the charges that he helped to rig the elections were "aberrations" that "remain to be charges. We will leave that to the investigating bodies."

Cruz said the agreement would effectively reduce the number of soldiers who participate in poll work to around 10 percent of the AFP.

In past elections, the entire 125,000-strong AFP was deputized for election work.

Cruz warned that the military would arrest any person or groups carrying firearms without a permit from the Comelec.

He said the AFP would file charges against candidates and their supporters who defy the Comelec's firearms ban.

Abalos said the military would concentrate on providing security in areas deemed to have "serious armed threats." This would involved manning checkpoints and enforcing the ban on firearms during the election period.

The Comelec and AFP will jointly determine whether an area has "serious armed threats." *With a report from Jerome Aning*

House holds Ombudsman's budget

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES yesterday deferred deliberations on the budget of the Office of the Ombudsman because the Minority Leader wanted an explanation as to why the latter's findings on the accuracy of the controversial automated counting machines (ACMs) in the failed Mega-Pacific deal contradicted those of the Supreme Court.

For nearly two hours, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero grilled Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez and her subordinates' about the controversial decision clearing Commission on Elections officials of any criminal liability in the P1.3-billion Mega Pacific poll automation deal.

During the hearing, the Ombudsman insisted that the Mega-Pacific's ACMs had passed the Comelec's accuracy requirements even as she admitted that the findings were based on the same Department of Science and Technology (DOST) test results that were submitted to the Supreme Court.

Escudero pointed out that the Ombudsman's position contradicted the high court's "final and executory" ruling that the machines failed to achieve "the accuracy rating criteria of 99.9995 percent" set up by the Comelec.

And because Gutierrez could not immediately answer Escudero's question as to whether the findings of the Ombudsman's Office contradicted a "final and executory" ruling of the high court, the Sorsogon congressman proposed that hearings on the Ombudsman's budget be deferred.

Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and the other members of the majority acceded, noting that Gutierrez was due at the Senate to attend another budget hearing there.

But during the hearing, Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante, who sponsored the Ombudsman's budget in the House, tried to explain the apparent contradiction.

He said the ACMs did pass the Comelec's technical requirements, explaining that the DOST submitted two sets of test results to the Supreme Court but the high tribunal focused only on the first set which found that the ACMs failed the technical requirements.

He said the other set of test results showed that machines passed the Comelec's accuracy "rating criteria of 99.9995 percent."

Senate OKs automated polls

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

DESPITE THE ANTICS OF FIVE SENATORS who hid from their colleagues so they would not be obliged to vote on it, the Senate yesterday approved the bill that would computerize the country's outmoded and much criticized manual electoral process.

Voting 13 to 0, the Senate approved on third and final reading Senate Bill 2231 which would allow the Commission on Elections to use an automated electoral system (AES) in 2007 and in subsequent electoral exercises.

The Senate bill provides for a partial implementation of the AES in 2007, that is, limited to six pilot provinces and highly urbanized cities in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao to be determined by the Comelec. Full and nationwide automation will be implemented in 2010.

"This is a great leap forward for our country. This is about making sure that every vote of every Filipino is counted, and counted properly. This is giving the future of the Philippines back to its own people," said Sen. Richard Gordon, the bill's sponsor and chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said the bill was too late in coming as the poll body was already preparing for manual voting for 2007 congressional and local elections and may not have enough time to consider testing an automated election system.

'Too late in the day'

"It's too late in the day," he said, adding that the poll body would see if it can still be implemented in 2007.

"We'll see if we can do it [and] I've yet to see the bill. It's rather difficult when they just pass a law and expect us to rush its implementation," Abalos said.

Heated debates that began on Wednesday afternoon and lasted up to almost 1 a.m. the next day preceded the bill's approval at about 12 noon yesterday.

The Wednesday session was marked by the unusual action of four opposition senators and one nominally administration senator who closeted themselves in the senators' lounge and then left the Senate building afterwards to ensure that there would be no quorum for the bill's approval.

Another senator reportedly proposed that the session hall doors be closed so that the senators in the lounge could not enter to vote against the bill.

"We hid in the lounge," Sen. Panfilo Lacson later admitted. He said administration Sen. Mar Roxas, who is opposing some provisions in the bill, joined him in the lounge, as did Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Senators Sergio Osmeña III and Jamby Madrigal. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

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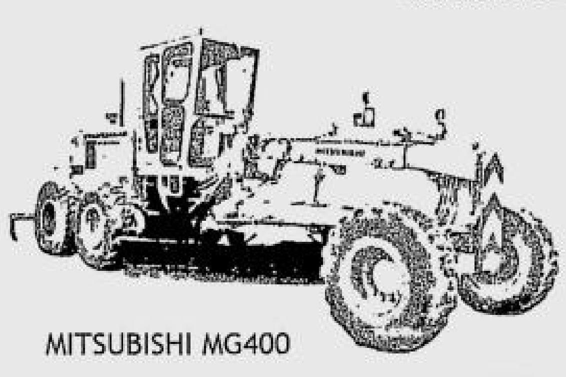

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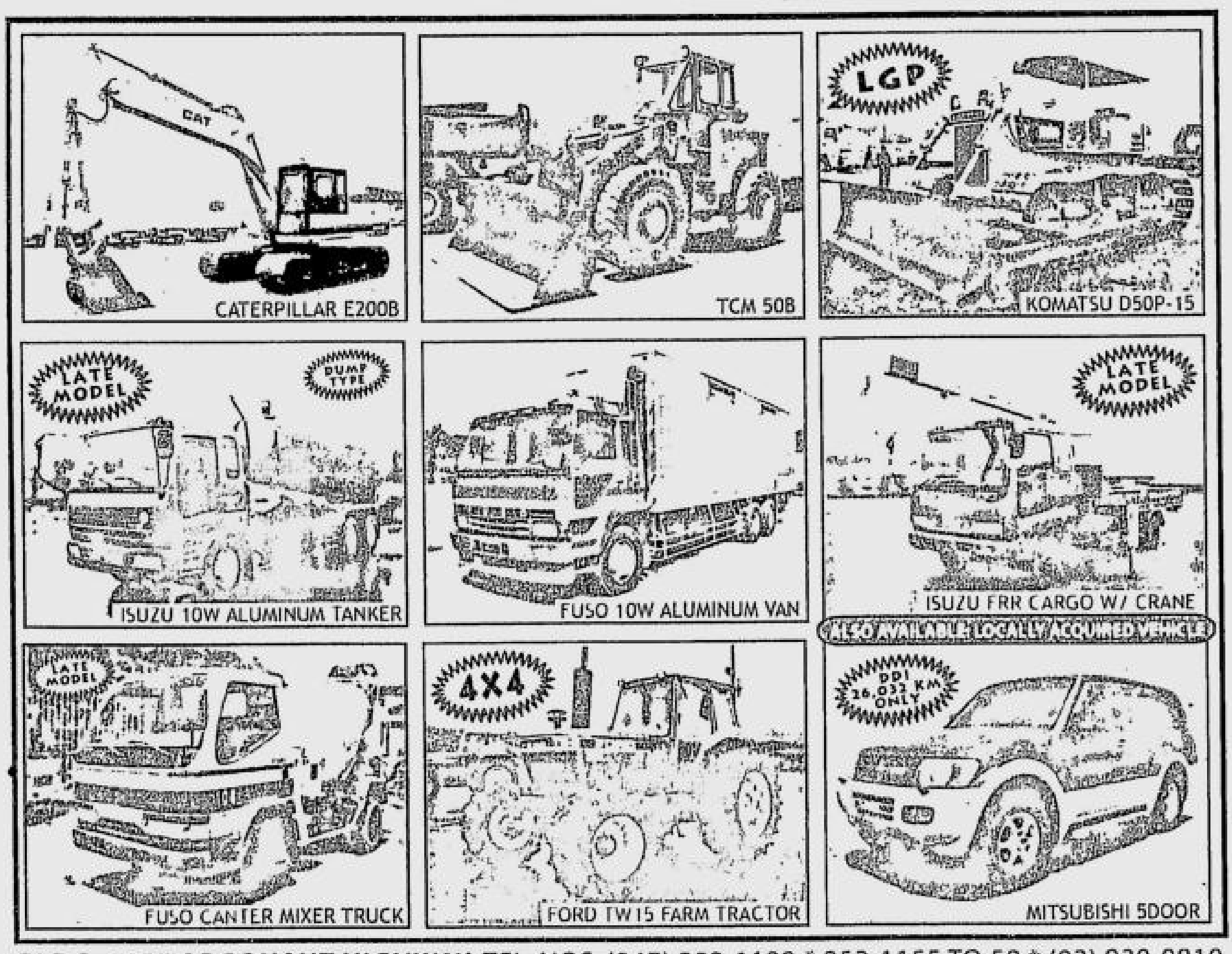

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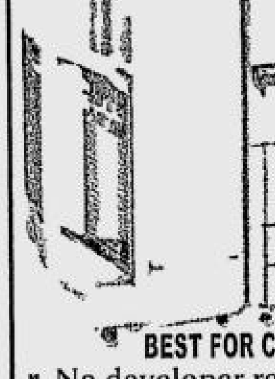

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Comelec eyes absentee voting by mail

By Jerome Aning

FILIPINO ABSENTEE VOTERS IN THE United States will be able to vote by mail in next year's local midterm elections, the Commission on Elections said yesterday.

Commissioner Florentino Tuason Jr., head of the Comelec's committee on overseas absentee voting (OAV), said the agency was studying if voting by mail could also be implemented in Hong Kong and Italy.

"We're still thinking about [allowing voting by mail] in Hong Kong because the territory is small and has an efficient post system," said Tuason in an interview. "We'll see which is more inexpensive and also, of course, we will take into consideration the clamor of the registered voters there."

In 2004, Hong Kong had the highest number of overseas absentee voters – some 88,000 – with a 71-percent turnout.

Tuason said the Comelec would also allow voting by mail in countries where the Philippines has no diplomatic outposts, like Portugal and Monaco, where voters in 2004 had to go all the way to the embassy in Paris to cast their ballots.

The cost of voting by mail compared to the cost of hiring and training personnel to man the overseas precincts will be a factor in the decision, he said.

Tuason noted there was also a high turnout of absentee voters in Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom in 2004.

The Comelec has asked for about P240 million for the OAV, Tuason said. If the mail option is used, he said the election agency would be spending between P300 and P500 per absentee voter.

Philippine embassies, consulates and other diplomatic outposts double as OAV registration centers and precincts.

As of Oct. 11, there were 130,769 new registered Filipino voters outside the country. A total of 37,258 and 44,295 registered at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, respectively, before they left.

Tuason projected that by the Oct. 31 deadline for OAV registration, there would be around 140,000 new registered overseas voters. In 2004, there were some 364,000 registered overseas voters, 65 percent of whom actually cast votes.

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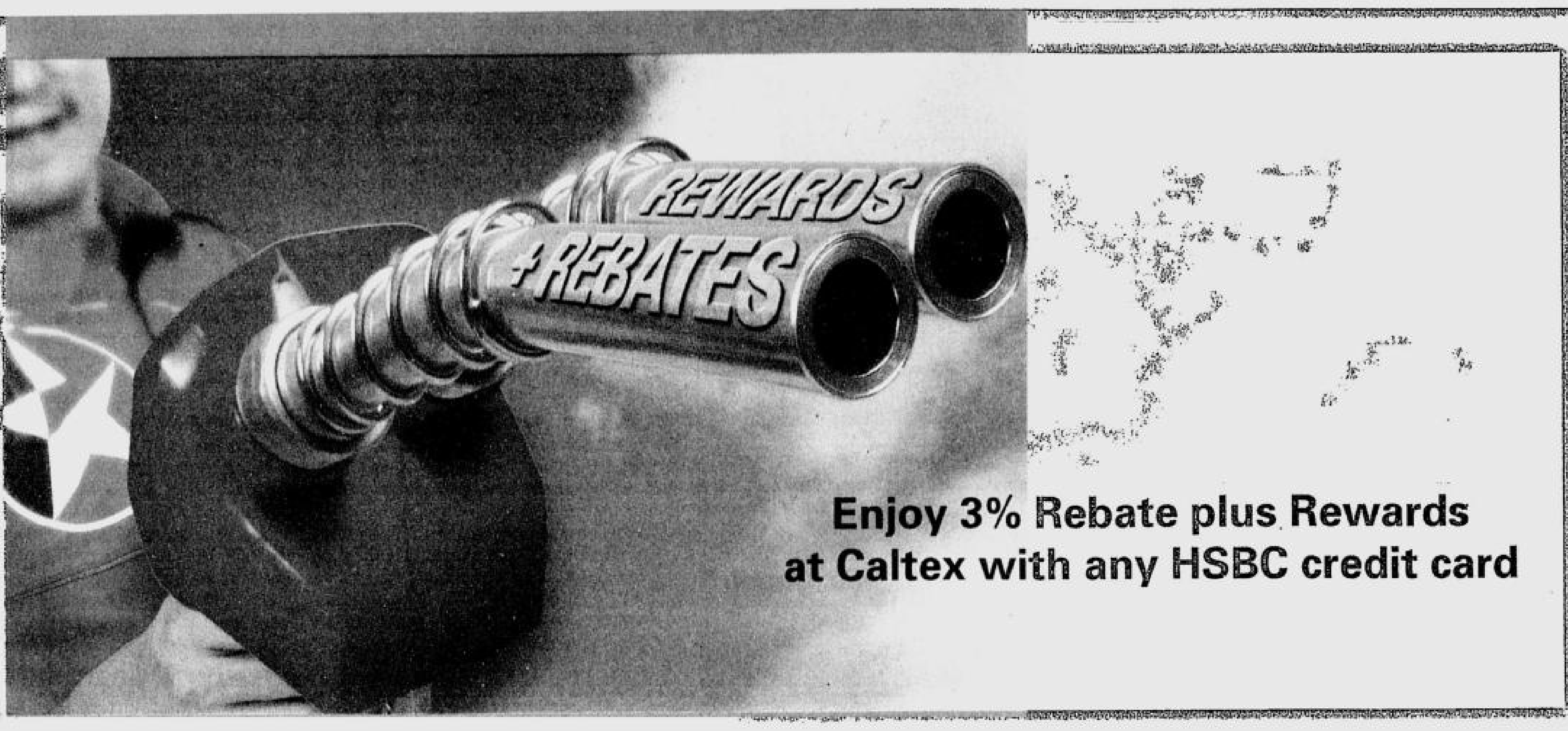

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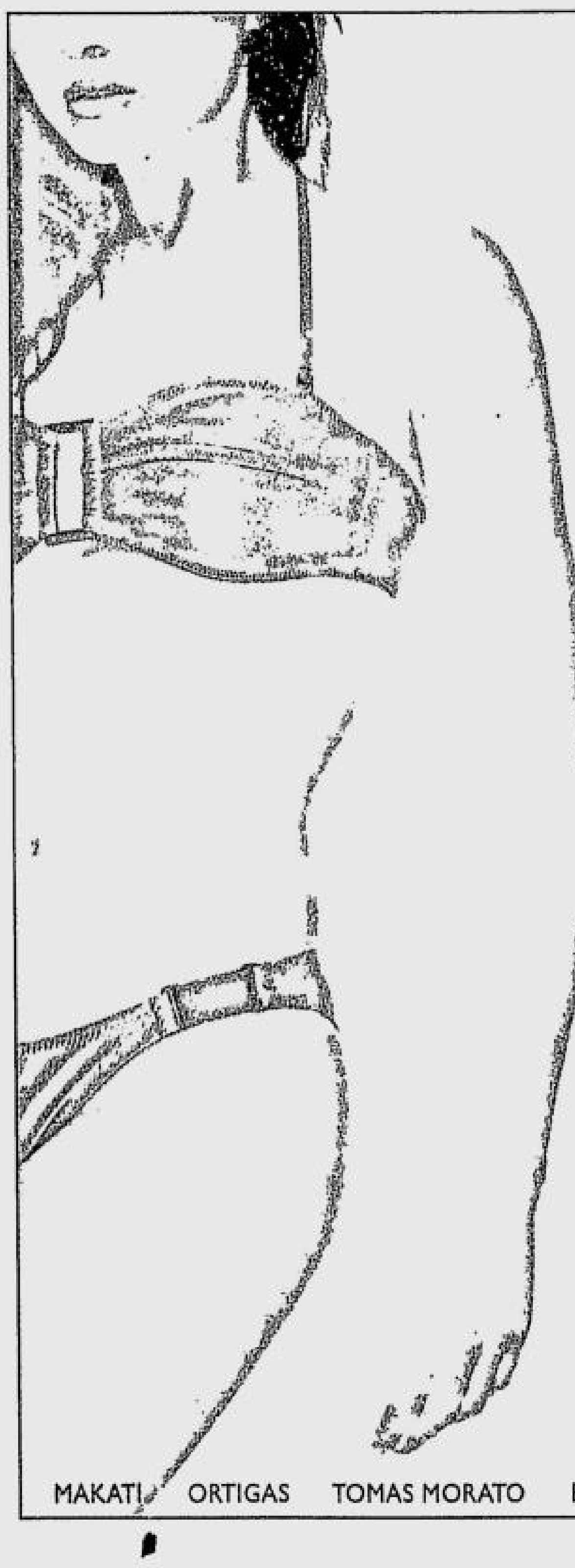

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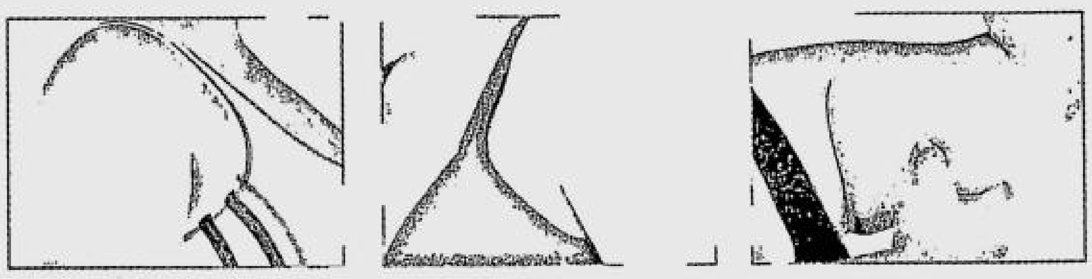

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Corrections

IN THE OCT. 11 ISSUE, a Metro story on Page A19—"Hold graft case filed in Sandigan, Binay asks"—misquoted a petition filed by Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and his fellow accused. In their petition, the accused said there was "undue haste"—not "due unhaste"—when the case was filed with the Sandiganbayan.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a Lifestyle article—"From certain disaster to miracle victory"—misstated the age of UST Tiger Joselito "Jojo" Duncil in his profile on Page C2. Duncil is 23—not 25—years old.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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BONANZA FOR GOV'T WORKERS

Palace to set aside P10 B for pay hike

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—BUDGET SECRETARY Rolando Andaya Jr. said the Department of Budget and Management would file in Congress before the end of the year the proposed Salary Standardization Law III that will not only raise but also make the salaries of more than one million government workers closer or at par with those in the private sector.

For the next year, DBM has allotted P10.3 billion for the wage increases but the total expenditure program for salary standardization over the next four years is almost P100 billion, Andaya said.

Low salary, he said, is the reason why some teachers end up working in Hong Kong as domestic helpers and why some government doctors are now nurses.

He disclosed that they made a "conservative study" comparing the salaries in a medium scale private corporation with that in government and found that "as the rank goes higher, the disparity (in salary scale) between the government and that of the private sector increases," he said. "You actually see the difference from Salary Grade 10 and up," Andaya said.

"The higher your educational attainment, the more you are punished," Andaya said, referring to teachers, doctors and other professionals who receive salaries much lower than their counterparts in the private sector.

"We will now try to move towards (solving the problem), to increase the salary (of state workers) using as a benchmark the private sector."

But Andaya said that SSL III is not only about salary increases. "There will be a lot of changes, not only a salary increase per se, but also 'unholy hour compensation,' and a better promotion system."

He added that the prevailing 33 salary grades would be lowered to just 22, while the step increment would be reduced from eight to five and will be performance-based.

"We also want to make sense of all our allowances, all the benefits we get … We want to make a general rule for everybody to follow," Andaya said.

Andaya, however, expressed his apprehension that with the May 2007 elections fast approaching, some politicians might come up with another scheme, like an across-the-board salary increase. Under this type of salary adjustment, the higher the salary, the less one gets percentage-wise.

"So, we need your support to lobby with the congressmen, the senators, to explain to them the merits (of the SSL III)," he told heads of government offices and local officials during a gathering Wednesday afternoon at the DBM regional office in this city.

With the approval of the supplemental budget, Andaya also announced that the DBM would release to local government units not later than this December the differential for their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA).

Andaya was in the city to deliver a message during a briefing on PS Depot and PX Mart Operations at the Kanhuraw Conference Hall that was attended by about 180 government workers. The depot and the commissary sell goods at low prices to government workers cooperatives or groups and to individual government employees.

Asean summit security beefed up

By Alcuin Papa

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES IS set to deploy a 500-strong Marine battalion to Cebu City to augment security for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in December.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon told reporters yesterday he had given the order to deploy to the 7th Marine Battalion Landing Team led by Lt. Col. Martin Binto.

"We are continuously assessing the situation in Cebu where we will have the Asean summit in December," he said.

The military had earlier said the Asean summit might be the target of a terror attack.

Esperon, however, said no threat to the summit had been detected yet. "But we want to be very thorough and very ready."

Marine spokesperson Lt. Col. Ariel Caculitan said the 7th Marine Battalion would be sent to Cebu as soon as it wrapped up joint exercises with American troops in Palawan, Crow Valley in Tarlac and the Marine base in Ternate, Cavite.

The Marines are due to arrive in Manila on Saturday for six months of "retraining" after a tour of duty in Mindanao.

Caculitan said the security duty at the Asean summit would be a "break" for the battalion which had mostly seen action against Moro insurgents the last nine years.

"They will just refurbish their weapons and supplies. Afterwards, they will fly to Cebu," Caculitan said.

The possibility of an attack during the Asean summit was heightened after three bombs exploded in Tacurong City, Makilala in North Cotabato and Cotabato City in the last few days. The attacks killed eight people and wounded scores of others.

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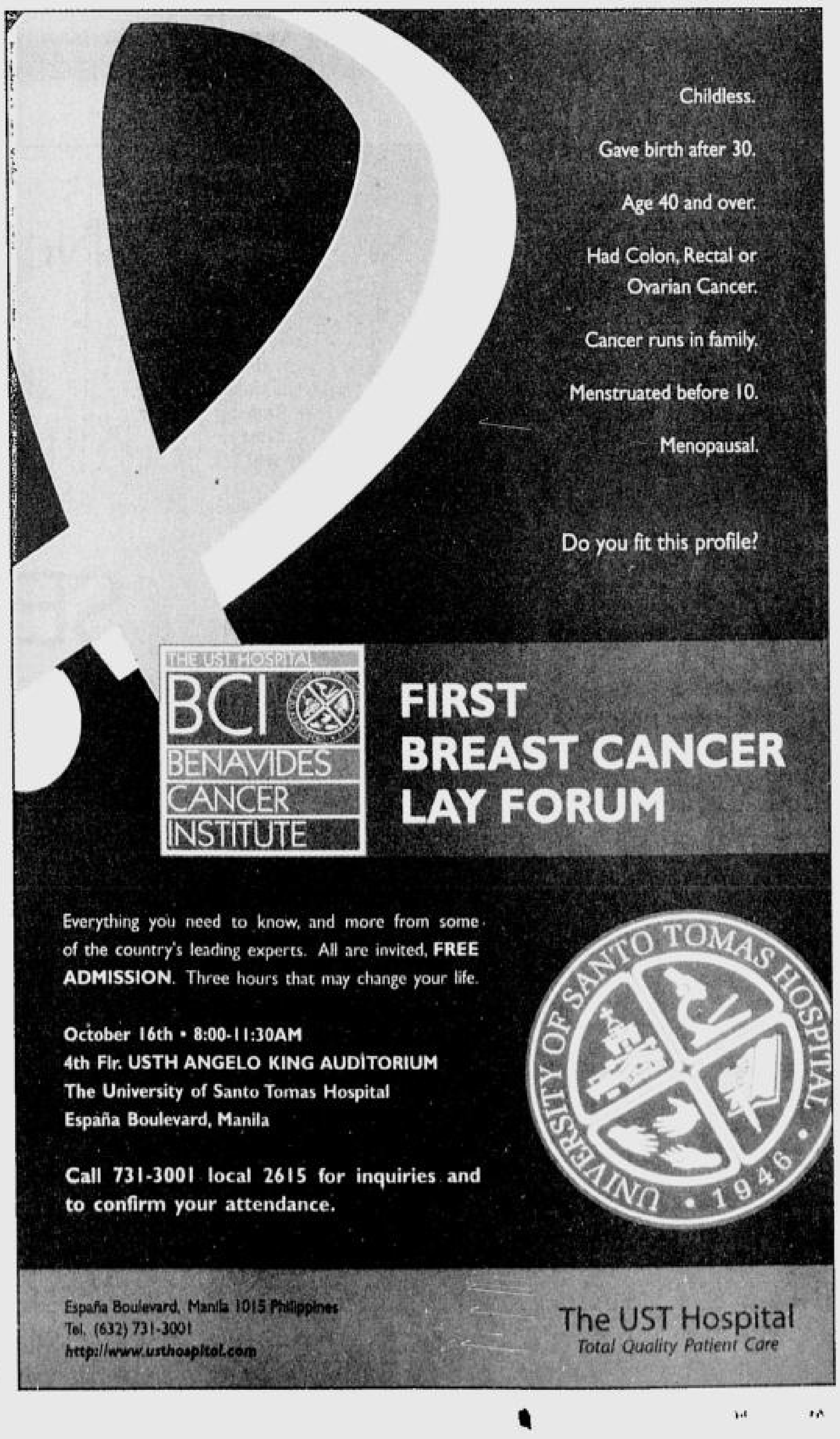
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Solons push for bishop's prosecution

By Michael Lim Ubac

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS yesterday pushed for the prosecution of Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias for coddling fugitive Magdalo soldiers allegedly planning a coup last February.

Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon, vice chair of the House committee on national defense and security, questioned the exclusion of Tobias from the charge sheet even after the bishop himself had admitted sheltering the Magdalo soldiers.

"That was a personal confession supported by the arrested Magdalo members' own testimony," Macarambon said, referring to the facts of the case enumerated in the complaint filed on Wednesday in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office

by the National Bureau of Investigation and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

The Magdalo soldiers admitted they hid in Tobias' house and several other places after escaping from Fort Bonifacio in January.

The complaint charged former University of the Philippines president Francisco Nemenzo Jr., lawyer Christopher Belmonte and nine others with obstruction of justice for providing safe haven to the Magdalo soldiers from Feb. 21 to 27. The coup was reportedly planned for Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of Edsa I.

"Charging Tobias may have political implications, but the point is the church leader violated the law," Macarambon said.

"Not charging Bishop Tobias will send the wrong signal that if you wear a habit, you are free to provide sanctuary to enemies of the state and violate the law," he said.

Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso, a member of the Commission on Appointments, said the NBI and CIDG knew about Tobias harboring the fugitive soldiers after 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan disclosed this after his recapture.

Veloso said it was incumbent upon the NBI and CIDG to explain why Tobias was not included in the charge sheet.

"Could it be that there will be others still to be charged for coddling the fugitive Magdalo soldiers?" Veloso said.

In a related development, lawyers of the Magdalo officers on trial for coup d'etat in connection with the Oakwood hotel takeover on July 27, 2003, have yet to decide if their clients will take the witness stand in their defense, now that the prosecution is about to rest its case.

The lawyers of the 31 junior military officers accused of leading the armed takeover of the plush Makati hotel said yesterday they had yet to finalize their strategy.

"We haven't talked about it. It depends on the offer of evidence of the prosecution... because if they won't be able to prove [coup d'etat], why should we present defense evidence?" said lawyer Theodore Te, after yesterday's hearing at Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148.

Another defense lawyer said he preferred one option.

"We might file a demurrer (to evidence) because coup d'etat was not proved... There might be no need to present evidence. A demurrer is my personal leaning. A coup d'etat involves violence, but what happened (at Oakwood) was just a demonstration," said Rene Saguisag.

A demurrer to evidence is a pleading filed by the defense asking the court to dismiss the charges outright because the prosecution evidence was weak. *With Tarra V. Quismundo*

Oil prices cut anew

By Abigail L. Ho

FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS month, oil firms slashed gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by 50 centavos a liter, reflecting the continuing decline of oil prices in the international market.

Chevron Philippines Inc., Flying V and Seaoil Petroleum Corp. adjusted their prices at 12:01 a.m. yesterday. Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc., and Eastern Petroleum Corp. followed at 6 a.m. the same day. Total (Philippines) Corp. also reduced prices at noon.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that the regional benchmark Dubai crude fell to an October average of $56.67 a barrel against last month's $59.82 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline, based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products, also dropped to $62.52 a barrel in the Oct. 1-11 period from $65.86 a barrel in September.

MOPS-based diesel went down to an average of $72.32 a barrel from $76.95 a barrel last month.

In an earlier interview, DOE oil industry management bureau director Zenaida Monsada said motorists could expect gasoline prices to go down by as much as P2 a liter this month, with the reductions expected to be implemented on a staggered basis.

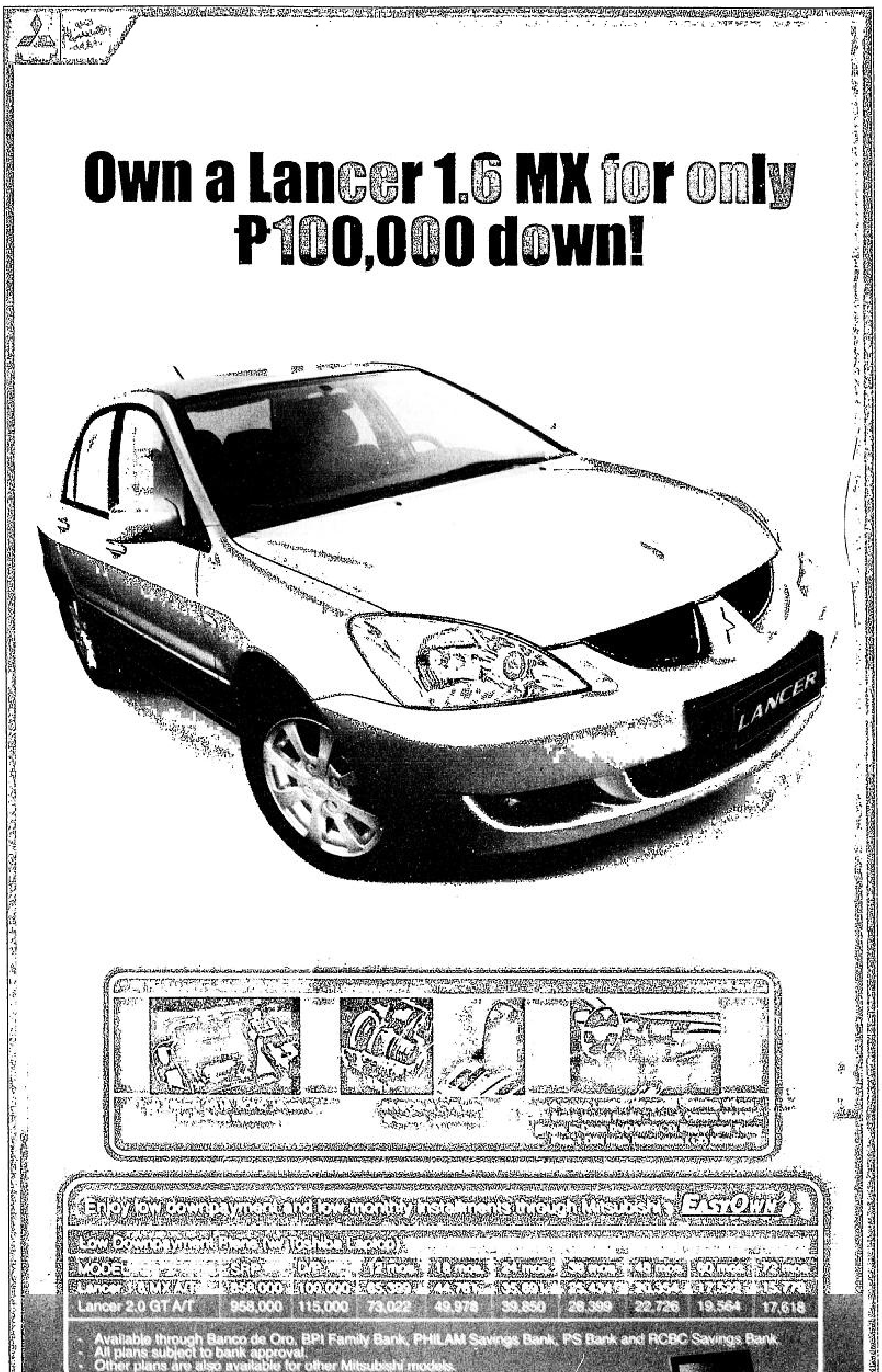
With this price reduction, gasoline prices have already dropped by P1 a liter this month.

Diesel prices, however, would not go down as much, because the tariff on crude and finished products has been restored to the mandated three percent, from the reduced level of two percent, Monsada said.Oil firms used tariff savings from gasoline to partially subsidize the prices of their socially sensitive diesel products.

Still, diesel prices have also gone down by P1 a liter this month.

Yesterday's rollback brought premium unleaded gasoline prices to between P37.74 and P40 a liter, diesel to between P32.20 and P37.50 a liter, and kerosene to between P35.69 and P40.50 a liter.

All prices are inclusive of the 12-percent value-added tax.



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A recent joint initiative by the British Embassy and the Supreme Court's Philippine Judicial Academy seeks to address this deficiency by enhancing the capacity of the local legal community through training inputs and improved information technology.

British Ambassador Peter Beckingham and the Philippine Judicial Academy chancellor, Justice Ameurfina A. Melencio Herrera, jointly announced the launching of a project entitled "Capacity-Building on Law and Economic Development Issues for the Philippine Judiciary."

The launch was held at the Justices Lounge of the Supreme Court on Oct. 5.

In a press statement, the British Embassy said it will fund the project, which will run for a year. Leading law professors, law practitioners and economists from the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law and Department of Economics have been mobilized to implement the plan.

Supreme Court Justice Reynato Puno said the initiative was a "breakthrough" in terms of facilitating the capability of the justice system to ensure a level economic playing field.

The project includes the conduct of seminar-workshop targeting key actors in the legal profession and the production and distribution of a manual of reference in CD-ROM format. The seminar-workshops will run from mid-November to early December of this year, followed by roundtable discussions with Supreme Court and Court of Appeals justices on key International Economic Law issues.

CD Technologies Asia, a private firm specializing in electronic publishing, has been contracted to develop the electronic manual.

The project provides easy and speedy access to relevant jurisprudence, lecture summaries, PowerPoint presentations, and pertinent Internet websites.

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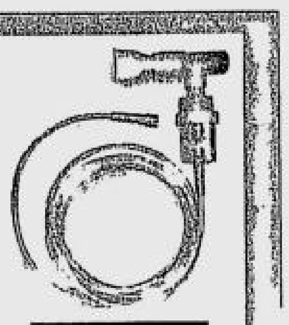

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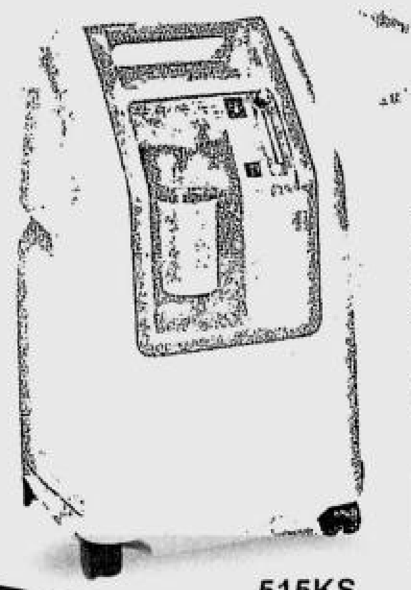

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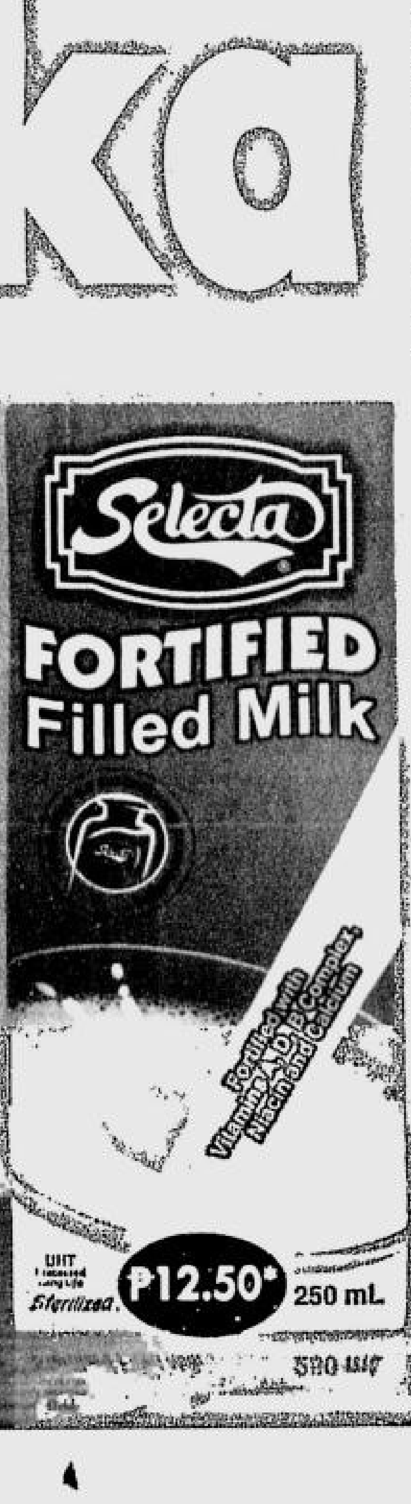
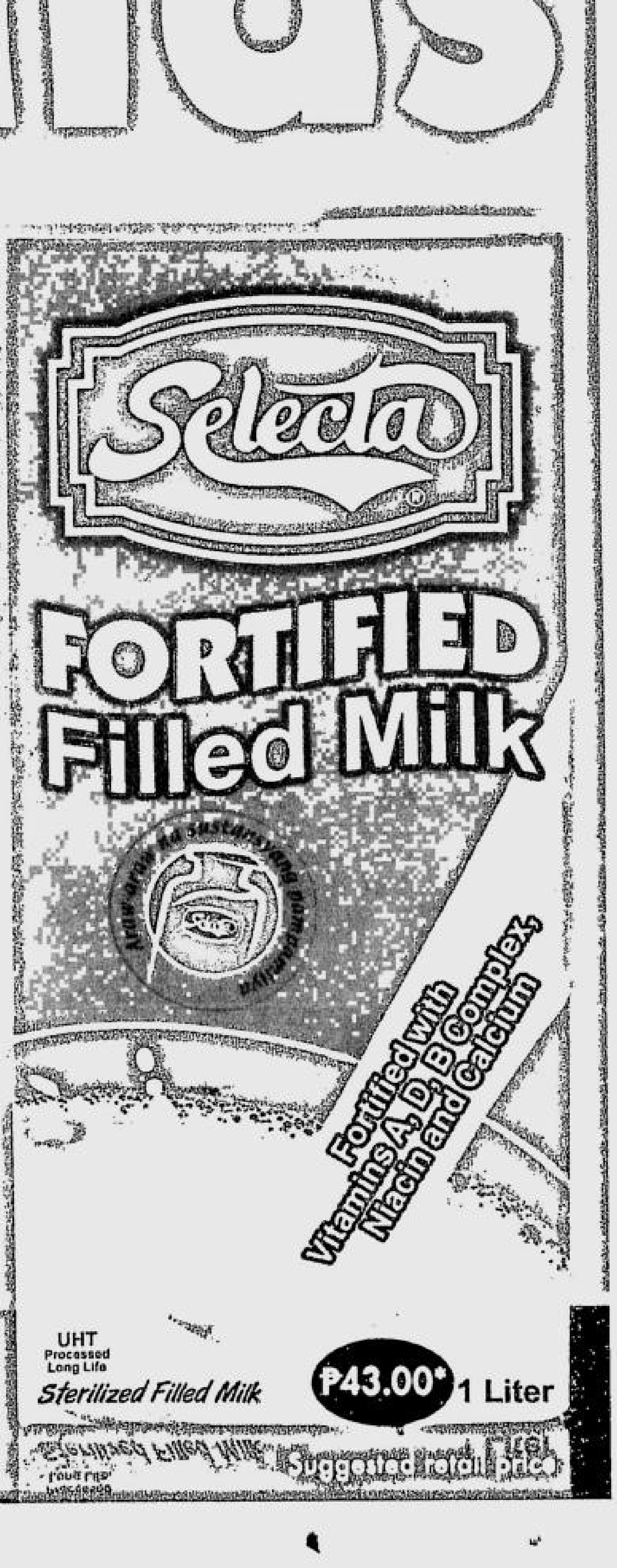




Cabral orders internal audit of DSWD funds

By Cynthia D. Balana

IN AN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE, SOCIAL WELfare and Development Secretary Esperanza Cabral has ordered a comprehensive audit of funds and operations of all 66 DSWD centers and institutions nationwide, including its Self-Employment Assistance-Kaunlaran (SEA-K) Program, a micro-enterprise development project for the poor.

Cabral herself supervised the cross-posting of 17 regional internal auditors and a select group of social workers whose task is to see whether social welfare programs, including the handling of donations, relief operations and financial grants, are properly implemented and actually benefiting the poor. The aim, she said, was to ensure a graft and corruption-free agency.

Earlier, the DSWD tapped Inter-Faith groups to help monitor DSWD relief operations.

"It is part of our efforts to make our activities more transparent and to make sure that we are accountable to the people we serve," Cabral told the INQUIRER in an interview.

'Keeping us honest'

"We feel that the Inter-Faith groups are good partners in this endeavor. We rely on them to keep us honest," she added.

Cabral said the deployment of internal audit teams started on Sept. 30 and will end Oct. 29 for the first batch; while the second batch will be posted from Oct. 30 to Nov. 23.

Prior to the cross-posting, the audit teams underwent a three-day pre-deployment orientation to equip them with the different audit approaches. The audit will include a review of financial transactions and operations made from January 2005 to June 2006.

"The audit of the centers and institutions is in support of my directive to raise standards of service and showcase them as centers of excellence," Cabral said.

The audit will also focus on personnel and fund management; property, supply and procurement management; asset and property management; records, reporting and information systems management; emergency and disaster management; and case management.

Cabral said that a follow-through review of last year's audit on donations coursed through their centers and institutions will also be made.

Most compliant

The SEA-K program, on the other hand, will be audited in terms of financial assistance to the beneficiaries as well as the rollback of the assistance.

Cabral said she wants an objective assessment of how the program is being implemented and whether it is sustainable. The review will assist management in introducing improvements to enhance program effectiveness.

On top of this comprehensive audit is the DSWD's Internal Audit Service, which is mandated to regularly examine and evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the agency's internal controls, including the implementation of their Integrity Development Action Plan(IDAP).

For the first semester of 2006, the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) ranked DSWD as the second most-compliant agency in integrity development among the national government agencies and local government units.

Airport studying ways to get rid of seized liquids

By Nikko Dizon

TWO MONTHS AFTER IMPLEMENTING A liquid ban, the airport authority is still looking for the best way to dispose of the items confiscated from air travelers.

A most likely option is to crush the bottles and tubes of liquids and gels, similar to the bulldozing of pirated CDs by the police, the INQUIRER learned yesterday.

"That has been suggested," an airport source said in an interview.

Another proposal was to burn the items but this has already been rejected, the source said who requested anonymity because the disposal procedure was still being finalized.

The police Aviation Security Group (ASG) has already some two roomful of confiscated items in its safekeeping.

The donation of the confiscated items may no longer be considered to avoid "controversies," the source said.

The airport authority continues to implement the liquid ban at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 1 and Centennial Terminal and the Manila Domestic Airport after a terrorist plot to blow up trans-Pacific flights in mid-air was uncovered by the London police last August.

The Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) has only slightly relaxed the ban after it allowed departing passengers to bring on board such items only if these were purchased from the duty free and retail shops located after the airports' final security check.

The Miaa said passengers should still put liquids, gels, and other items of similar consistency in their checked in bags to avoid confiscation by security officers.

Airline Operators Council (AOC) chair Leoncio Nakpil agreed that the confiscated items should be destroyed and that this should be shown to the public.

"It's okay because it's teaching a lesson to the stubborn passengers who continue to ignore the airport authority's regulation," Nakpil told the INQUIRER

Gov't OKs 3 mining exploration permits

THE GOVERNMENT APPROVED ON Tuesday three mining exploration permits, indicating it was bent on promoting the revival of the industry despite opposition by influential Catholic bishops and environmental groups.

The approvals came a month after the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines complained to President Macapagal-Arroyo that Manila seemed to be abandoning active promotion of the sector.

"We want a robust mining industry that will serve as a bridge to economic growth, economic prosperity, social equity and environmental enhancement," Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes said at a news conference.

"We want to deliver the message that the government, the president of the republic, is serious about wanting to develop the mining industry as a means of improving the quality of life of our people."

Earlier this year, the local industry feared Ms Arroyo was reversing a campaign to attract foreign investment to the mining sector after a commission, created by the President, called for a review of the country's investor-friendly mining laws.

Pending in Congress

The review remains pending in both houses of Congress, and it may take months before investors will know whether there will be any drastic changes to the law, which allows for 100 percent foreign ownership of mines.

The review was sparked by cyanide leaks at a copper and gold mine belonging to Australia's Lafayette Mining Ltd. in 2005, which raised the ire of the mainly Catholic country's bishops and green groups.

On Tuesday, Reyes said he had approved a permit for MRL Gold Philippines Inc., a unit of Canadian firm Mindoro Resources Ltd., to explore a 316-hectare area in Malimono town in Surigao del Norte province in the south of the country.

He also approved two permits that will allow Egerton Gold Philippines Inc., which is 40 percent owned by Australian firm Egerton Gold NL, to explore 6,980 hectares in Batangas province, south of Manila.

MRL has allotted nearly P24 million pesos for its exploration project while Egerton estimated spending at about P6 million.

An exploration permit has a term of two years, renewable for up to eight years.

If a viable mine deposit is discovered, a foreign firm can ask for a 25-year contract with the government to develop the area in a joint venture with a local firm or fully fund the project itself.

'Use it or lose it'

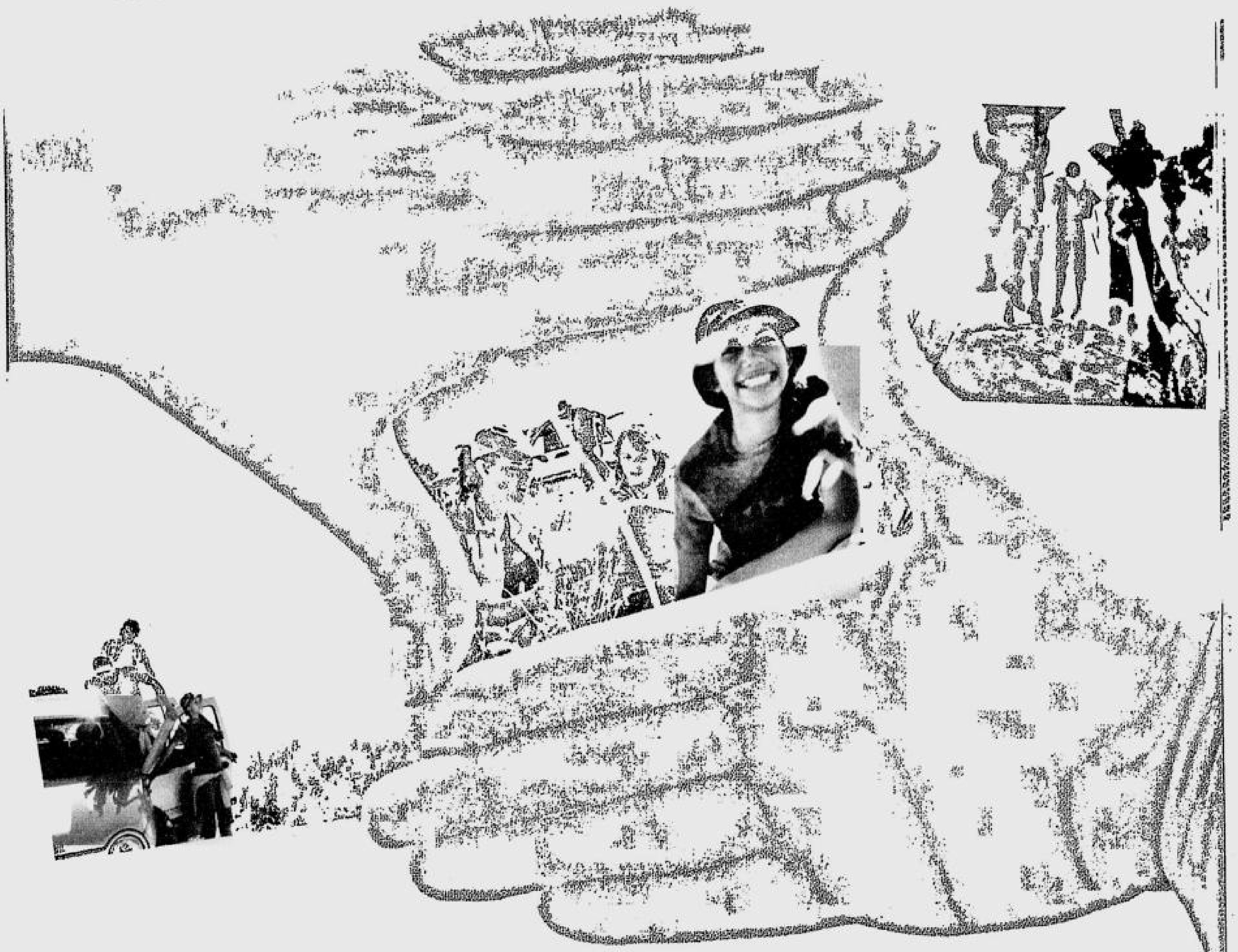
Reyes said there were about 1,300 applications for joint ventures to develop Philippine mines and 56 applications by foreign firms to fully fund mining development projects.

He said the government was reviewing all applications, some as old as 10 years, to ferret out nuisance applicants.

"We will implement a use it or lose it policy," he said.

The government, which says the country has $1 trillion of unexplored gold, copper and nickel deposits, actively promoted 24 mining projects last year to revive its once lucrative industry.

It said the country needed at least $6.5 billion to rehabilitate closed mines and put into production identified gold, copper and nickel deposits. *Reuters*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GMA widens probe of electricity spot market

From page A1

Ms Arroyo said she had instructed the Department of Energy, Department of Trade and Industry, and Department of Justice to look into the allegations of price manipulation in the power sector.

Salceda said the potential scandal paralleled the California electricity crisis in which big energy companies like the bankrupt Enron Corp. had manipulated prices.

"Shades of Enron loom large in the market. I never thought of the California power [scandal] becoming a reality in the Philippines so soon," said Salceda, referring to the price-fixing scam that rocked California in 2000.

Just like what is going on in the Philippine wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), the power crisis in California had its roots in the inefficient deregulation of the market and the creation of its own spot market for power that was easily manipulated by shrewd players like Enron.

Enron had to shell out $1.5 billion in a settlement agreement with California regulators in 2005.

Consumers to pay more

Salceda said Ms Arroyo wanted the government to act fast before the artificially induced rise in spot market prices started being reflected in monthly electric bills.

Customers of Meralco may have to pay more because of the price spikes in the WESM.

Meralco is seeking 28 centavos more for every kilowatt-hour of power that it distributes in its franchise area.

In an application with the Energy Regulatory Commission, Meralco sought to increase the generation component of its monthly charges to P4.709 per kWh from the prevailing P4.429 per kWh, to reflect the increase in its generation cost last month.

Meralco said the generation cost increase it was seeking would be revenue-neutral to the company because this would cover costs that it had already paid for last month.

Suspicion

Lasse Holopainen, president of Philippine Electricity Market Corp. (PEMC), however, was not as categorical as Salceda about the alleged manipulation of electricity prices.

PEMC is a nonstock, nonprofit organization that oversees the buying and selling of electricity in the wholesale spot market.

"There is suspicion of manipulation in prices," Holopainen said yesterday at a news conference.

He said PEMC was investigating PSALM, the agency in charge of selling Napocor power plants and the national electricity grid, for possible price manipulation.

PSALM has denied the allegation.

"There have been no concerted and deliberate efforts to manipulate electricity prices on the part of PSALM's four trading teams," PSALM's president Nieves Osorio said in a statement.

Osorio said PSALM welcomed the investigation but added that "bid prices are influenced by several factors, among them, the cost of producing electricity which varies from plant to plant."

PSALM trades on behalf of government power plants with a total capacity of 6,000 megawatts, or about half that on Luzon island.

Meralco not involved

Jesus Francisco, Meralco president and chief operating officer, said the distribution utility had nothing to do with the sudden price increases.

"The increases were borne out in the study of the PEMC market surveillance committee. In fact, Meralco had called the attention of the PEMC about the increases quite early," he said in a statement. Francisco also sits on the PEMC board as a director.

Nixon Hao, Meralco energy management head, said Meralco could not possibly be engaged in price manipulation because it was only a buyer in the spot market.

"We merely source power from WESM. Generation companies assume full responsibility for how and when their plants are dispatched," he said. Hao is a member of the PEMC committee on rules change.

"We would like to stress that Meralco is not a seller in the market and is not in a position to manipulate the price. Although it is a fact that the two independent power producers (IPPs) with Meralco contracts have to schedule their generation through WESM, they are actually only bidding zero. So in that case they are in no position to set the price." Hao said.

Meralco IPPs

Meralco gets almost half of its supply requirements from the spot market, with the balance coming from its bilateral supply contracts with IPPs First Gas Power Corp. and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd.

"Based on market data, there is no evidence of manipulation on the buyers' side. The investigation covers PSALM and no one else," Holopainen said.

"The distributors already expressed concern early on upon seeing the data from the market. This triggered the closer monitoring of the market surveillance committee, and eventually the ongoing investigation of the enforcement and compliance office," the PEMC president said.

Suspension of WESM

PEMC said it was also considering suspending the wholesale market to preempt high prices in November and December, when three power plants on Luzon will be out of action.

The three natural gas plants, with 2,700 megawatts of capacity, will be closed for maintenance of a pipeline from Nov. 18 to Dec. 12.

At the Joint Congressional Power Commission hearing, committee chair Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago yesterday said the JCPC was prepared to "take drastic measures" to stop any impending power rate increases due to price manipulation.

"If it becomes necessary, we might order a halt to the commercial operation of the wholesale electricity spot market," Santiago said.

"If evidence before the (JCPC) establishes that there was intentional price manipulation, then we have to punish those responsible. On the other hand, if the unusual price increases were simply part of the learning curve, then the public announcement of the investigation by the market operator would have jeopardized the privatization program," she said.

Holopainen assured the public that "the price of electricity within the period in question will not be passed on to consumers while the investigation is ongoing."

The ERC is not expected to rule on Meralco's application for at least 30 days after filing as there is a 30-day period within which oppositions and comments may be filed. Meralco filed its application in the last week of September.

Conducive to collusion

In an interview, Salceda said there was no justifiable reason for power prices to go up because there was more than adequate power supply to feed the demand, which has remained stable over the past few months.

"If both supply and demand are normal, why should prices suddenly shoot up if not for the players involved?" he said.

Salceda said the oligopolistic nature of WESM was conducive to collusion among the few big players—PSALM and Napocor control the bulk of power sold in the spot market while Meralco is the single biggest buyer of power in the market.

Meralco said it would not benefit from the higher spot market prices because it would just pass on the cost to its consumers. But by inflating spot market prices, Meralco would be justified in buying more expensive power from its IPPs that do not sell their power through WESM, according to an economist.

The government has set a minimum energy quantity (MEQ) level of 83 percent for IPPs in order to limit the volume of power bought from these expensive sellers. But at the spot market price of P6.88 per kWh, the P4.80 per kWh selling price of IPPs above the MEQ level looks like a bargain.

Probe to hamper privatization

Analysts said the probe was likely to further hamper the government's attempt to raise up to $5 billion and cut its debt by selling dozens of power plants belonging to Napocor and leasing the electricity grid.

Napocor's debts are equivalent to about a third of the Philippines' annual gross domestic product.

The 24-hour computer-based wholesale market was seen as the key to the sale of the Napocor plants because it was meant to free up the supply of electricity on the main island of Luzon, and partly allay investor concerns about the sector's profitability.

Even without the allegations against PSALM, the government's attempts to sell its power assets have met with little success due to long-held concerns about corruption and official meddling in tariffs, as well as political and security uncertainties.

Earlier this week, PSALM said three groups had lined up to bid for a 25-year contract to run the P138-billion power grid—the fourth attempt to auction off the network since 2003.

The agency was meant to sell 70 percent of the total rated capacity of some 31 Napocor plants by the end of 2004 but so far has sold only six plants or 3 percent of the targeted capacity. *With a report from Reuters*

IN THE KNOW

THE WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY Spot Market is a centralized venue for buyers and sellers to engage in the trading of electricity. It was established by virtue of Republic Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act that was signed into law in June 2001. The WESM is governed by the Philippine Electricity Market Board, which also heads the Philippine Electricity Market Corp. (PEMC).

The PEMC is a nonstock, nonprofit organization in charge of the overall operations of WESM. The WESM is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Bids are made every hour.

Typical trading starts with participants submitting bids to the market operator (MO), in this case, PEMC. The MO is in charge of matching the offers of generators with the bids of customers. Bids should be submitted three hours before the electricity is due. If the electricity is due by 8 p.m., the bid should be in by 5 p.m.

After matching the bids, the MO submits the dispatch schedule to the system operator (SO) for implementation. The SO, the National Transmission Corp. (Transco), in turn, is in charge of central dispatch and of informing participants of their respective prices and schedules.

If the suppliers and buyers are to settle payments through the WESM, the total cost of electricity is computed using the market clearing price, market fees and charges for ancillary services. Market fees charged by WESM amount to a little over a centavo per kilowatt-hour. Meanwhile, user fees for ancillary services are charged by Transco and are fixed by the Energy Regulatory Board.

The law requires that for the first five years of the WESM, at least 10 percent of the power demand should be obtained through the market. Today, 90 percent of the capacity of power generators is still covered by bilateral power supply contracts in which the prices are fixed. *Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

17 test review execs charged; NBI lauds PRC for acting on leak

From page A1

a feat such as this for the sake of their respective review schools, it is not a far-fetched idea that their co-owners had consented to such 'modus operandi' not only in the recent [exam] but in previous ones as well," said the complaint signed by NBI Director Nestor Mantaring.

"If this were not the case, it is a wonder then that they had managed to stay on top against their competitors, when practically the same services are being offered by the rest," it said.

Penalties

Under Republic Act 8981, "a person who manipulates or rigs licensure examination results, secretly informs, or makes known ... questions prior to the conduct of the examination or tampers with the grades ... shall, upon conviction, be punished by imprisonment of not less than six years and one day or up to 12 years and a fine of between P50,000 and P100,000 or both."

If the offender is an officer or employee of the PRC or a member of the regulatory board, he/she shall be removed from office.

Accomplices may be slapped a penalty of imprisonment ranging from four to six years or a fine ranging from P20,000 to P49,000, or both.

A lesser penalty of imprisonment ranging from two to four years or a fine from P5,000 to P19,000, or both, shall be imposed on the accessories.

Passers who cheated

"The allegations of leakage have tainted the integrity of the [exam], creating suspicion and doubts in its results," the NBI said.

But it did not indict the examinees who had actively taken part in the cheating, saying that "to push for [their] prosecution" would be "not only difficult but [also] impractical."

"This is apart from the fact that this bureau would not be willing to serve as an instrument in depriving the students of their professional advancement," the NBI said.

It added: "They [had] not known the questions prior to the exam for they were in fact recipients of [the questions] through review materials which they still had to study and internalize. There is not much debate needed to show that the students are likewise not guilty of tampering [with the grades], for [this] is in fact not the issue in this case."

Board of Nursing (BON) members Anesia Dionisio and Virginia Madeja and examiners of the five-part exam held on June 11 and 12 were earlier recommended to be charged for violation of RA 8981 as well as RA 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Documentary evidence

The NBI mostly based its findings on the testimonies of some 20 witnesses, including those who undertook their reviews at the three review centers, BON and PRC employees and persons responsible for the photocopying of the leaked questions.

The documentary evidence included Dionisio's notes on the questions and the corresponding answers, photocopies of her notes, students' notes taken during coaching sessions given by the review centers, and a compact disc of the PowerPoint presentation made by Inress during its "final coaching" on July 9.

During that Inress session, it was reportedly claimed that 100 of 500 review questions in the psychiatric nursing test would "surely come out" in the exam. A refund of the tuition of "whoever would top" the exam was also purportedly promised.

NBI Regional Director Elfren Meneses Jr. said the investigation conducted by the bureau's Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division showed that the review centers conducted special "final briefing activities" for their clients, where the actual answers to Tests III and V were shown in a PowerPoint presentations.

Meneses said Gapuz held its final briefing in Baguio City, Inress at an SM Manila theater, and Pentagon at the Aliw Theater in Pasay City.

In conducting a comparative study of how the clients of the three review centers had fared in the exam, the NBI found that they obtained 90-97 percent scores in Tests III and V, compared to 80-90 percent for those who studied at other review centers.

An NBI analysis also found that "the ratings of Inress and Gapuz on Tests III and V show that they are relatively higher, in fact more than twice, compared to the passing percentages they obtained in the entirety of the exam."

'Leak in every sense'

According to the NBI, the evidence was "sufficient to establish" that the three review centers "have much to do with the proliferation of the leakage."

It said it had "sounded off the possible criminal liability" of review center personnel who had facilitated the coaching sessions and distributed the leaked materials.

It also debunked claims that the leak consisted of "tips" that the review center executives claimed were "normal practice" to attract examinees to register.

"What actually transpired was a leakage in every sense of the word. Indeed, the review centers possessed and discussed questions with even the prescribed answers; clearly they must have too valuable material that originated from the persons who prepared the exam," the NBI said.

On Wednesday, the NBI announced that the cheating was limited only to the cities of Manila and Baguio in Luzon and covered only Tests III and V.

It said it had found no evidence to support claims that the leak had also occurred in to the Visayas and Mindanao andincluded Tests I and II.

PRC chair to defy Palace, insisting on no retake

From page A1

be revoked.

Besides, those licensed nurses who had gone to the United States could no longer be recalled, she said.

Rosero, the personal dentist of President Macapagal-Arroyo, was unfazed by Malacañang's apparent displeasure over her defiant stance against a retake and the transfer of the PRC from the Office of the President to the Department of Labor and Employment.

Asked to comment on Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's remark on Wednesday that she should have "exercised more prudence" in her statements at an earlier Senate hearing, Rosero quickly retorted: "We did."

She again dismissed calls for her resignation, saying she would leave the matter to her "professional judgment."

Ministerial duty

At the hearing, Rosero said that of the 17,821 board passers, 6,000 had taken the oath and 2,000 among them had been issued licenses.

She said the rest of the 6,000 who had been sworn in as nurses were not able to obtain licenses because of the TRO issued by the appellate court.

Lacson said it was a "ministerial duty" of the PRC to administer the oath to the board passers once the TRO was lifted.

But he warned that the raging scandal would become more chaotic with Rosero indicating that she would defy Malacañang.

"She's not sure she won't defy Malacañang [if it orders a retake]," Lacson said, adding that the PRC's position was correct "as of now," the commission being mandated by law to issue licenses to those who pass the board exams.

Lacson also praised Rosero, saying: "I really admire you for standing up for your convictions. And this is not to spite Mr. Dante Ang."

The senator was referring to the chair of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas and the President's former image-maker, who, along with Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, had been accused by Rosero of being an "intruder" and of doing a demolition job on the PRC.

Prudence

Lacson said it was doubtful that a "mere" executive order from the Palace could cancel the licenses issued by the PRC in compliance with its legal mandate.

"They (Malacañang) can no longer go after those who were able to obtain their license," he said, adding:

"I think it will be useful to be prudent. The issue has become too complicated. Malacañang has its own stand, the PRC has its own stand, and even board passers have divided views. But there's a pending case in the Court of Appeals. Won't it be prudent to wait for the CA decision?"

But PRC Commissioner Renato Valdecantos declared a position at variance with Rosero's.

When Sen. Rodolfo Biazon asked what would happen to the oaths administered and licenses issued if the court reversed the PRC stance, Valdecantos said: "If the court says Tests III and V are invalidated and there will be a retake, I believe the licenses will be revoked."

Pro and con

At the same hearing, Ang and Rene Luis Tadle, president of the faculty association of the University of Sto. Tomas College of Nursing, reiterated their call for a retake, saying the nursing system had been tainted by the cheating scandal.

But more than 20 board passers who had grouped into the Alliance of New Nurses (ANN), as well as a mother of another passer, presented their passionate plea against a retake.

Ang, head of the presidential task force lobbying to make the Philippines a testing site for the US National Council Licensure Examinations, said the issue of cheating had gone beyond the June 2006 nursing batch. He said this was why there should be a nationwide retake of Tests III and V.

"In undesirable situations like war, we must do the right thing. My position is we have to take the bitter pill if we are to cure the patient. I'm not finger-pointing, I'm just saying the system has been tainted and we must do something to erase the stigma," he said.

On the other hand, Violeta Rosales expressed her and other parents' anguish over the controversy.

"We parents were alarmed when Brion appeared on TV and started talking about a retake without weighing the issues. We pity our children," Rosales said.

'Hypothetical stigma'

The ANN's Victor Tan Jr. and Renato Aquino Jr. said Ang, "professors of universities like UST and UP College of Nursing and complainants from Baguio malign the innocent 2006 board passers in their pursuit to remove the hypothetical stigma that cannot be verified by law."

"The allegation of diminished trust of local and international employers to Filipino nurses is an immature tactic to justify the retake of the examination," Tan and Aquino said in a statement read during the hearing.

"We have done nothing to taint ourselves and the nursing profession," they said.

Separate blacks and whites

Tan and Aquino also said investigators should identify the culprits behind the cheating: "There must be a way to separate the blacks from the whites."

The ANN called on Brion not to preempt the court ruling on the controversy.

It said the 17,821 passers had "suffered enough."

"Along with our families who are unjustly affected, we look forward to our exceptional service," it added.

SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES DEVELOPMENT
The officers of the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA) were sworn in by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in Malacañang recently following the revival of the agency. From left to right are chairman of the board Yosof H. Jikiri, board member Saeed A. Daof, Administrator Zamzamin L. Ampatuan, and Ermita. SPDA initiates, promotes and undertakes business projects in Southern Philippines of corporate and economic nature in agriculture, power, infrastructure, energy, public utilities, land development, manufacturing, exploration and or utilization of natural resources.

Labor chief going to S. Korea

By Jerome Aning

LABOR SECRETARY ARTURO BRION WILL make a brief visit to South Korea on Wednesday to look into the needs of overseas Filipino workers there following the international crisis sparked by North Korea's nuclear test early this week.

However, there was no need to evacuate or repatriate the estimated 70,000 documented and undocumented OFWs in South Korea, Brion said following his confirmation by the Commission on Appointments the other day.

"We are highly concerned with what's happening to them [but] I don't even want to talk about the [possibility of evacuating them]; we're only monitoring the situation," Brion explained.

"[We] will touch base with the Filipino communities in South Korea, check on their condition and let them know that we're highly concerned about their condition," he added.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration has already began "mapping" the locations of OFWs in Korea, most of whom are factory workers, entertainers and domestics. The agency has already initiated talks with the South Korean-deploying recruiters for their inputs.

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'Unholy alliance' of GMA foes is dead, says Palace

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG BELIEVES THAT THE COMmunists have a falling out with their allies from the opposition and rightist elements from the military after the New People's Army stepped up its attacks against military contingents and destruction of facilities since peace talks with the government broke down two years ago.

"We think that the unholy alliance between the opposition and the communists is no more. The opposition sided with the communists in seeking the ouster of the President has decided to break its ties," said National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales in a phone interview.

Gonzales said the opposition members, which he did not identify, did not agree with the actions of the Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA to intensify the armed struggle with the government.

Gonzales had previously accused members of the traditional opposition (whom he did not identify) of joining hands with the Left to advance their agenda of toppling President Arroyo from power on the back of the election cheating charges that resurfaced in June last year with the release of the "Hello Garci" tapes.

Gonzales said that even the communists' links with rightist element have been strained by these incessant attacks which have caused many of their peers to die in combat.

"The NPA has been launching an attack practically every day since the peace talks fell. These attacks have intensified further especially in the last few months," said Gonzales.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, October 13, 2006
27th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Gal 3:7-14
Gsopel: Luke 11:15-26

As Jesus was casting out a devil some of the people said, "He drives out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the chief of the demons." So others wanted to put him to the test by asking him for a heavenly sign.

But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every nation divided by civil war is on the road to ruin, and will fall. If Satan also is divided, his empire is coming to an end. How can you say that I drive out demons by calling upon Beelzebul? If I drive them out by Beelzebul, by whom do your fellow members drive out demons? They will be your judge, then.

But suppose I drive out demons by the finger of God; would not this mean that the kingdom of God has come upon you? As long as the strong and armed man guards his house, his goods are safe. But when a stronger one attacks and overcomes him, the challenger takes away all the weapons he relied on and disposes of his spoils.

Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me, scatters.

When the evil spirit goes out of a person, it wanders through dry lands looking for a resting place. And finding none, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds the house swept and everything in order. Then it goes to fetch seven other spirits even worse than itself. They move in and settle there, so that the last state of that person is worse than the first."

Commentary

Do we rely on faith, like those who have gone before us, or do we keep relying on the law, observing the letter, as proscribed? Or are we learning to rely on Christ who has saved us from the law, remembering that crucifixion—obedience unto death, on behalf of others' needs—is what has saved us in Jesus? This is the blessing of Jesus—the gift of the Spirit that takes us beyond the law, and deep into its heart. Do we let Jesus cast out what hinders us from obedience (the meaning of the word Satan—"hinderer") and do we stand with Jesus, gathering others with him? Are we worse off than before our baptisms because we do evil, claiming to belong to Jesus? These are hard questions that must be asked.

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Athletes fixtures in private planes

JITTERY New Yorkers look up at the smoldering Belaire condo building at 524 East 72nd St. after Cordle's small plane hit the building on Thursday in New York City. AFP

NEW YORK—IN THE VISITORS' clubhouse at Shea Stadium, advertisements for private planes are splashed above the lockers and imprinted on the cushions of players' seats.

At the New York Yankees' spring training clubhouse in Tampa, Florida, folders touting jets were piled high last February.

With so many multimillionaires among them, many athletes are private-plane regulars. When pitcher Kevin Brown was with the Los Angeles Dodgers, his contract included a clause in which the team paid for a dozen annual round trips on a private jet.

But in the team sports, it is the rare athlete who pilots his own plane.

Hours after New York Yankees pitcher Cory Lidle was killed when his plane crashed into a Manhattan high-rise Wednesday, NHL team Montreal's right wing Alexei Kovalev—a licensed pilot himself—said the Canadiens have placed no restrictions on his flying.

'Something I like to do'

"I think the way it works is you're responsible for everything you do in your life," said Kovalev. "It's something I like to do. I don't think they would try to prevent me or stop me from flying."

Kovalev usually flies between Montreal and New York, where he used to play for the Rangers.

"Since Sept. 11, you have to know what's going on in the city because there's a lot of helicopters taking off from the Hudson River and the East Side and the West Side," he said. "So you definitely have to be careful."

Golf great Arnold Palmer has been piloting since the 1950s, according to his website, and Arizona Diamondbacks coach Jay Bell, who retired as a baseball player in 2003, earned a pilot's license in 2004, according to his team biography.

Phillies, Yankees ban

Lidle's $6.3-million, two-year contract, agreed with the Phillies in November 2004, contained a provision saying the team could get out of paying the remainder if he were injured or killed while flying a plane. Because the regular season is over, Lidle already had received the full amount.

The Yankees have inserted similar provisions in the guarantee language of their player's contracts ever since captain Thurman Munson died while piloting his plane on an off-day in 1979. The guarantee clause, which prohibits many activities, was used to get out of Aaron Boone's deal when the third baseman got hurt playing a pickup basketball game before the 2004 season.

Bob DuPuy, baseball's chief operating officer, said the time was not right to talk about whether baseball should prohibit players from piloting.

"It would be inappropriate and insensitive to comment on this so close to the tragedy today," he said in an e-mail. "All of us are trying to cope with the loss of a ballplayer in the prime of his career through such a terrible incident and will consider the consequences of his actions in a much longer window."

NBA prohibits flying planes

In the NBA, "operating an aircraft of any kind" is listed in the uniform player contract as a prohibited activity, requiring written consent of team.

The NHL takes a different stance on piloting.

"It can be the subject of individual negotiation," deputy commissioner Bill Daly said in an e-mail, adding that the standard player contract prohibiting players "from engaging in other dangerous sports."

Mason Ashe, who represents Oakland Raiders quarterback Aaron Brooks, said the standard NFL contract contains a provision that players can't "engage in activities other than football which may involve a significant risk of personal injury" without prior written consent from the team.

"I recommend that if one of my guys is having a celebrity weekend with pickup basketball games or the like, that the guy speak to a general manager or coach and get permission," Ashe said.

Drivers have personal aircraft

NASCAR drivers and teams rely heavily on flying, and most drivers own personal planes. Some are licensed pilots, including 2003 series champion Matt Kenseth and teammate Carl Edwards, who upon completion of training last November celebrated the final race of the season by flying former girlfriend Amanda Beard and his family to the Bahamas.

Their boss, car owner Jack Roush, was nearly killed in 2002 when the plane he was flying ran into power lines. Roush, who was in critical condition, survived and still flies.

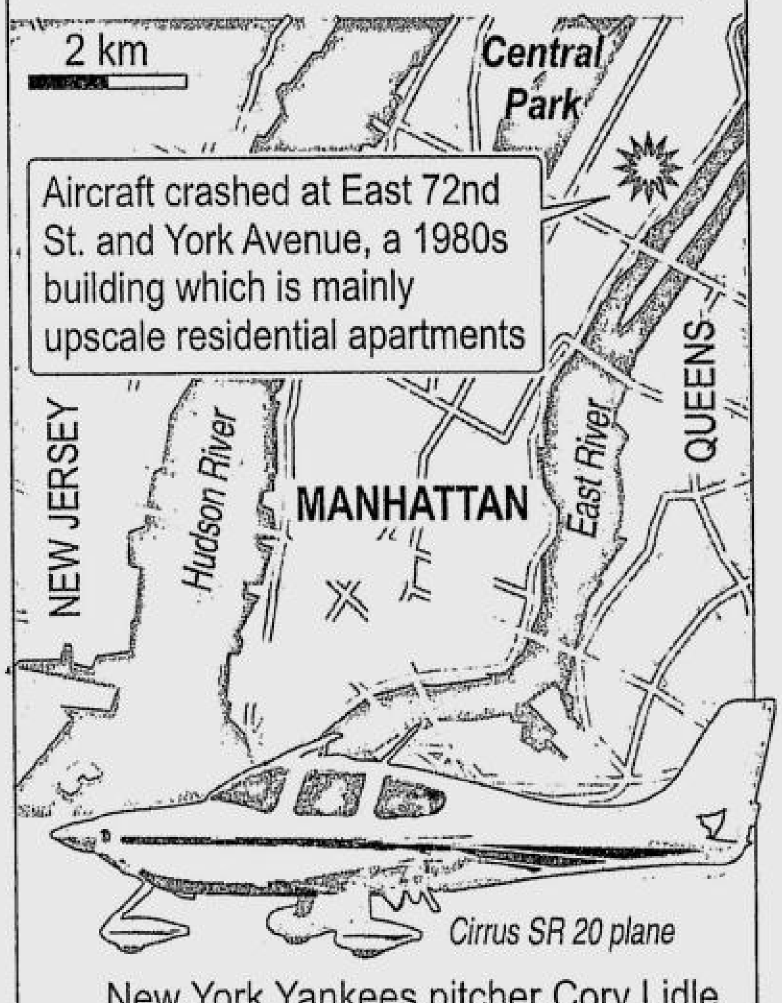
Ten people were killed in October 2004 when a Hendrick Motorsports plane crashed near Martinsville, Virginia, en route to a NASCAR race, including team owner Rick Hendrick's son, brother, two nieces, two Hendrick employees and an associate, a helicopter pilot for Tony Stewart and the plane's two pilots.

Driver Davey Allison died in 1993 after a helicopter he was piloting crashed on the infield at Talladega Superspeedway in Talladega, Alabama.

"We have a lot of faith in the people we hire and if you think about it, you'll worry yourself to death," driver Denny Hamlin said. "Statistics-wise, you're more likely to be in a car accident than a plane." *AP*

NEW YORK PLANE CRASH

At least 2 people were killed when a small aircraft crashed into a 52-story building on Manhattan's upper East Side in overcast weather on Wednesday



Aircraft crashed at East 72nd St. and York Avenue, a 1980s building which is mainly upscale residential apartments

New York Yankees pitcher Cory Lidle who owned and piloted the plane, was killed along with another flying instructor

REUTERS

New Yorkers think 9/11 as plane hits high-rise

From page A1

loud blast as the small plane, carrying New York Yankees pitcher Cory Lidle, crashed into the red-brick building, killing the 34-year-old baseball veteran and his flight instructor.

At least 21 people were taken to the hospital, most of them firefighters.

"There was a boom sound, but we weren't sure what it was, and then they told us to evacuate the building," said Lilian Regolia, who works opposite.

The craft took off from New Jersey's Teterboro Airport shortly before 2:30 p.m. (2:30 a.m. Manila time) and was in the air for about 20 minutes, authorities said.

A federal official, speaking on condition of anonymity, had said the plane issued a distress call before the crash. But National Transportation Safety Board member Debbie Hersman said at a late-night news conference that the FAA found no indication of a mayday call.

Hersman said debris was scattered everywhere at the crash scene, including aircraft parts and headsets on the ground. The propeller separated from the engine. Investigators also obtained the pilot's log book.

Cause unknown

The FAA said it was too early to determine what might have caused the crash, and it was not immediately clear who was at the controls.

The plane, flying north over the East River along the usual flight corridor, came through a hazy, cloudy sky and hit the red-brick tower overlooking the river with a loud bang.

Emergency helicopters circled overhead as dozens of fire crews, police and medics were on the scene within minutes, shutting down a whole section of the city. Police kept crowds of anxious onlookers behind security cordons.

United sense of dread

In no other city in the world does a plane crashing into an apartment block create such a united sense of déjà vu and such dread, and not just for the crowds of people lining sidewalks outside shops and offices.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg said he understood the reaction shared by so many New Yorkers.

"In this day and age, obviously everybody is very sensitive when they hear something like a plane crashing into a building," he told reporters.

Fighter jets scrambled

In another move reminding people of the Sept. 11 connection, the US military scrambled fighter jets above several US cities as a precaution.

"Fighters, along with early warning systems, they've been up there for half an hour, 45 minutes," Adm. Tim Keating, commander of the US Northern Command, told CNN.

The incident raised questions about how a plane could get so close to a New York City building after the Sept. 11 attacks.

"We're under a high alert and you would assume that if something like this happened, people would have known about it before it occurred, not after," said former National Transportation Safety Board Director Jim Hall.

But even as the fighter jets continued to fly, all talk of a new terror attack was dismissed, and the crash was chalked up to an accident.

"Thank God it was nothing more serious," Bloomberg said. "We think we're very lucky." *AFP*

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GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN THE WEST ZONE

Maynilad reduces water rates this month

RESIDENTS in the West Zone will have reduced water rates as Maynilad Water Services Inc. implements a reduction in its Foreign Currency Differential Adjustment (FCDA) charge starting this month.

Maynilad customers will see a decrease of P1.88 per month in their water bill for an average residential customer consuming 30 cubic meters.

The reduction in water tariff for Maynilad customers is due to a downward adjustment in the FCDA to 0.57% of the Basic Charge for the fourth quarter of 2006, following the appreciation of the peso. The average exchange rate went down to P51.36 to the US dollar this August 2006, compared to the old rate of P52.13 to the US dollar last May 2006.

The FCDA is a tariff mechanism used by utility companies to allow it to recover losses from the fluctuating movements of the peso against other currencies. Due to currency adjustments following a stronger peso, Maynilad's FCDA charge will decrease from P0.22 per cubic meter to P0.12 per cubic meter effective October 18.

Maynilad pays foreign-dominated Concession Fees to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and funds projects that will improve service levels and expand service coverage in the West Zone.

Some of Maynilad's latest projects include the S2 Tempfacil Project in Pasay, which provided 7,000 new water service connections in the districts of San Rafael and San Roque; a Bayan Tubig Project in Kitanlad, Brgy. Tatalon, which solved the problem of illegal connections in the area; and a Capital Expenditure Project in Brgy. Sta. Lucia, Novaliches, which laid 9.2 km. of new pipes and benefited over 1,000 households.

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'Ompong' to bring more rain in Metro, Luzon

By Blanche S. Rivera

A LOW PRESSURE AREA OVER NORTHERN Luzon has developed into a tropical depression, causing rain showers in Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon.

Tropical depression "Ompong," the 15th tropical cyclone to enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility, was located by satellite image 690 km east of Casiguran, Aurora, as of 2 p.m. yesterday.

Moving westward at 7 kph, Ompong is expected to hover around Aurora until Sunday with maximum sustained winds of 55 kph near the center, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.

"This disturbance is not likely to affect any part of Luzon within the next 24 hours. However, it will induce cloudiness over the eastern section of Luzon which will bring rains over the area that may trigger floods and landslides," Pagasa said in its bulletin.

Pagasa weather chief Nathaniel Cruz said Ompong was not showing signs of strengthening into a tropical storm within the week. He said the movement of Ompong was being influenced by a stronger tropical cyclone outside the PAR.

"There is little possibility that it will intensify because the environment is not conducive for it to strengthen. There is another tropical cyclone that is affecting Ompong's movement," Cruz said.

Tropical cyclone Soulik, which is still 1,600 km east of northern Luzon, is stronger and has a bigger circulation area, Pagasa said.

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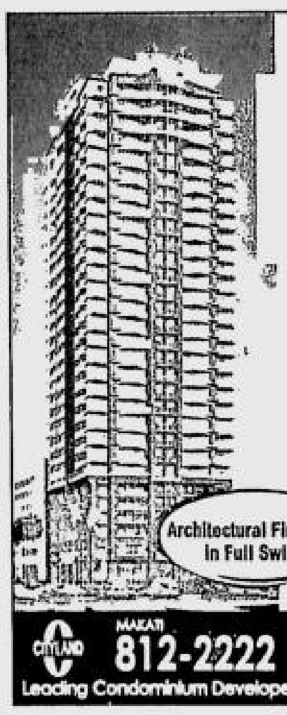

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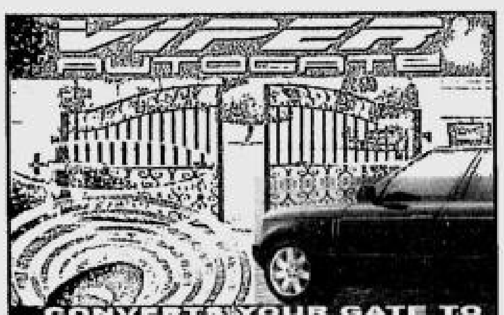

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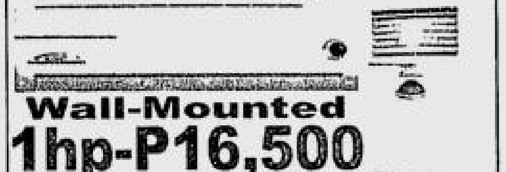

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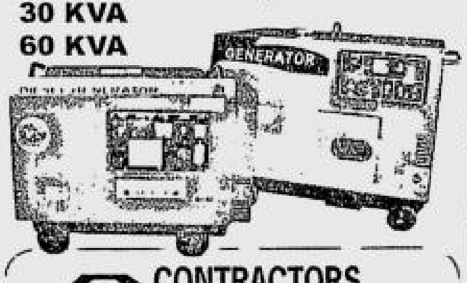

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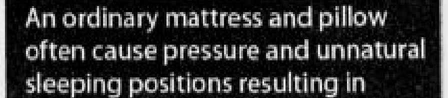

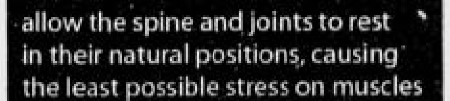

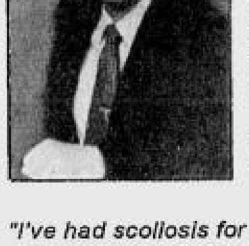

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ROYAL BRUNEI

Belgian blames gov't for bishop's slay

A VISITING BELGIAN LAWYER yesterday said the government could be held accountable under international law for the unabated political killings in the country, noting that "it's a different matter when the Philippine military unleashes violence against civilians."

"The cold-blooded murders of activists and our fellow barristers here in the Philippines look rooted in the government's counterinsurgency program that makes no distinction between combatants and noncombatants," said Jo Dereymaeker, a member of International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL) which is holding its congress in Davao City.

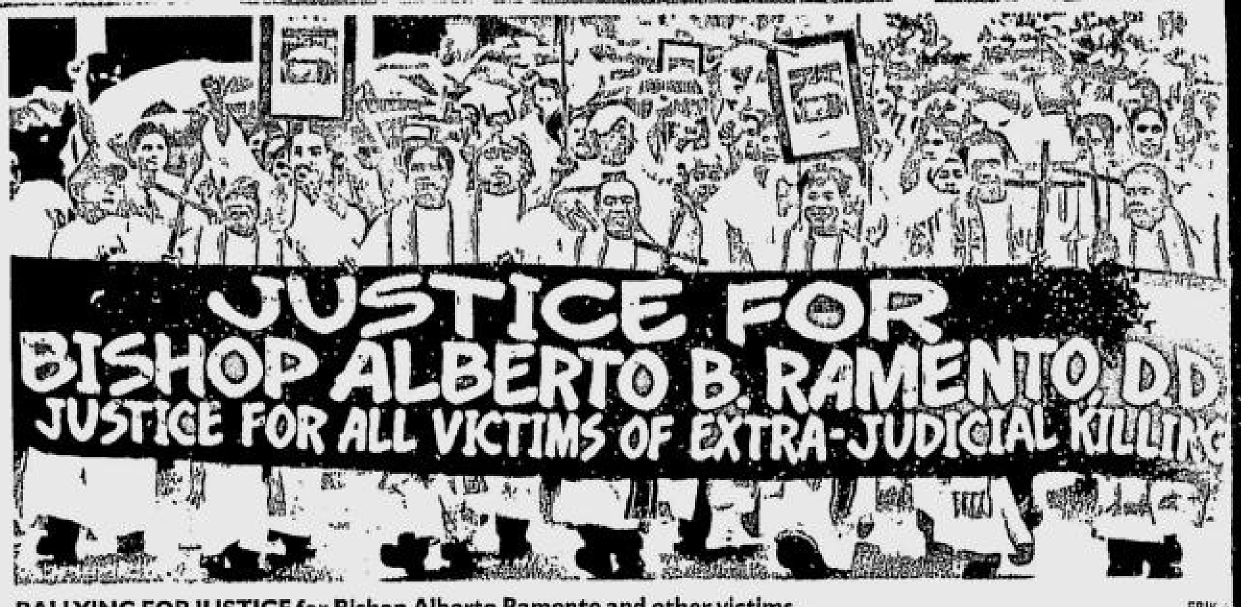
"That is punishable under international law," the human rights lawyer said in a statement.

"International law prohibits the Philippine government from harming, abducting and killing civilians as it wages war on its enemies," she said.

Dereymaeker and five other foreign human rights lawyers are attending the IAPL's four-day international congress that ends on Sunday.

She said the Philippine government "may actually have a hand" in the extra-judicial killings.

"This could be the reason why there is [no interest] in undertaking a truly independent investigation as demanded by victims' families and human rights organizations," she said. *Christian V. Esguerra*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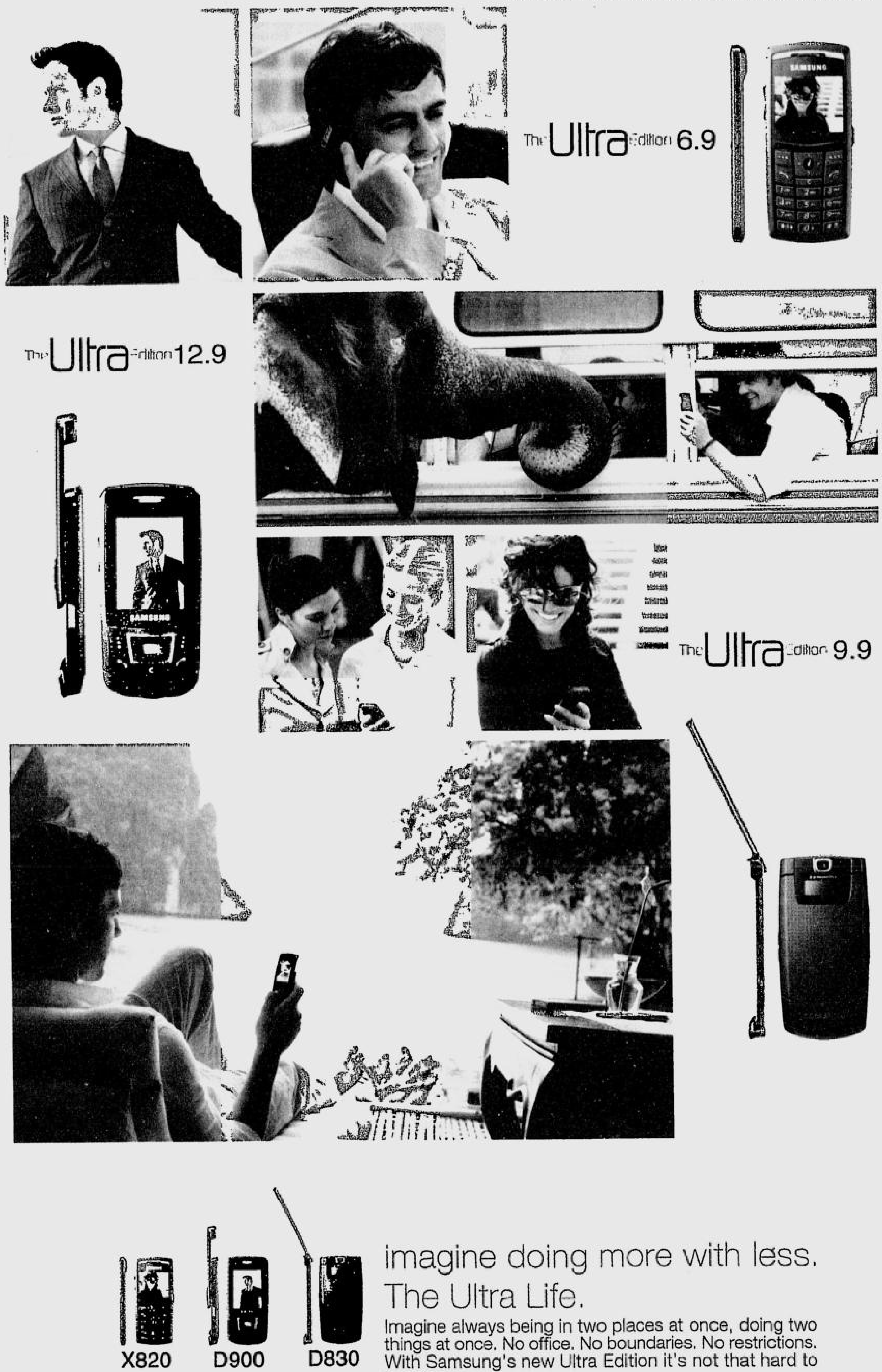

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PAGC ax

By Christine O. Avendaño

MALACANANG YESTERDAY RELEASED the names of three more presidential appointees dismissed for irregularities and another one suspended for abuse of authority in line with the stepped up "shame campaign" of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

The latest Palace dismissals were identified as Antonio Puruganan, former Cordillera Autonomous Region director of the Department of Public Works and Highways; Edilberto Carabbacan, his assistant regional director; and Kunesa Sekak, field office regional director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The three officials—all of whom rendered long years of government service ranging from 32 to 42 years—were dismissed for being involved in irregular transactions that cost government money.

Suspended for three months without pay, meanwhile, was Dr. Jose Cabantan, division superintendent of Toledo, Cebu for repeatedly refusing to release the per-

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Pacific Plans,

By Alcuin Papa
and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

CLIENTS OF PACIFIC PLANS Inc. (PPI) have lauded the decision of the Court of Appeals remanding to a Makati court the rehabilitation plan of the troubled educational pre-need firm, calling it a victory for themselves.

Philip Piccio, president of the Parents Enabling Parents Coalition (PEP Coalition), said it was time PPI "practice[d] good governance."

"The company should keep its obligations and promises to its clients—that's us—embodied in the contracts we signed when we bought their education plans. For as long as they kept their obligations to us, there would have been no problem. That's good corporate governance. And it's the moral thing to do," Piccio said.

For its part, PPI said it would appeal the CA decision.

In a statement, PPI lawyer Felix Desiderio Jr. said the CA decision did not reverse the Makati Regional Trial Court ruling that allowed the firm's rehabilitation.

He said the CA merely ordered the

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Ombudsman vo

By Philip C. Tubeza

OMBUDSMAN MA. MERCEDITAS Gutierrez yesterday promised Congress that her office would resolve by next year the plunder cases against former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante and former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Attending the House hearing on the Ombudsman budget, Gutierrez said that the cases would be resolved by 2007 although her office had yet to even subpoena Bolante, who is in the United States under detention.

"The Office of the Ombudsman promises that these cases will have results by 2007," said Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante, who sponsored the Ombudsman budget before the plenary.

"The Ombudsman promises that it is doing what it can, considering the voluminous cases they have and with their very meager resources, to be able to promptly decide on the filed cases," he added.

Former Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez in December 2002 filed plunder charges against Perez after he accused the first justice secretary of President Macapagal-Arroyo of asking for $2 million in January 2001, just days after Ms Arroyo assumed the presidency.

Abante said the Ombudsman had yet to finish its investigation, adding it was still trying to

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DO YOU HAVE PARASKEVIdekatriaphobia?

.If you do, or if you can decipher this 10-syllable phobia, you probably won't be going out today. Here's another clue: It's why, to this day, there are buildings that skip the floor between 12 and 14.

It's the fear of Friday the 13th, said to be an unlucky day. Yes, that's today.

Every year has at least one Friday the 13th. This year, however, there are two, the other one was in January.

Many people dismiss this as a silly superstition. It traces its origins from ancient mythology, the Bible and selective oral history.

Christians have long been wary of Fridays, as Jesus was crucified on a Friday and the day has been connected with penance. Some theologians also hold that Adam ate the forbidden fruit on a Friday, that Noah's Great Flood began on a Friday, and that the Temple of Solomon was destroyed on a Friday as well. As for the number, there were supposedly 13 people at the dinner table during Jesus' Last Supper.

(In Judaism, on the other hand, the number 13 signifies the age of maturity, and according to the Torah, God has 13 Attributes of Mercy.)

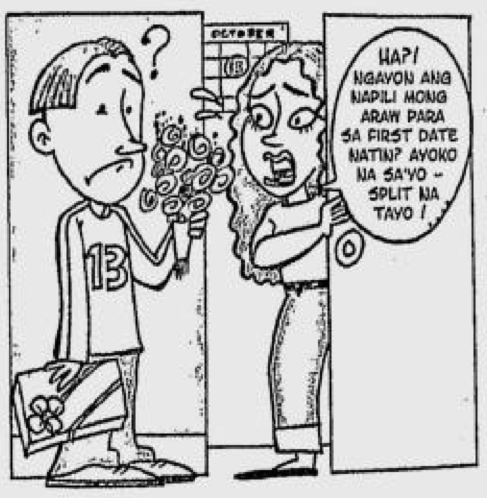
"Friday" is named after the Norse goddess Freya, goddess of sex, marriage and fertility, whose counterpart in the Roman pantheon is Venus, goddess of Love. Some theories suggest that these strong female figures had posed a threat to male-dominated Christianity, so the Church vilified the day named after them. Freya was also transformed into a witch in Christian folklore.

According to Scandivian myths, the number 13 also signified bad luck because it was associated with Loki, the 13th demigod who was described as evil and cruel.

Legends also say that a witches' coven is comprised of 13 people.

In history, the number 13 has been deemed unfortunate. It was on October 13, 1307, about 700 years ago, when King Philip IV ordered the mass arrest for heresy of the Knights Templar, a legendary order of "warrior monks" formed during the time of the Christian Crusades.

The number 13 is also associated with the aborted Apollo mission, Apollo 13. *Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*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PAGC's dismissal order has
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Guzman told reporters that
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the "accessory penalties" that
smissal, like the forfeiting of his benefits and perpetual disqualification to hold public office.

Carabbacan was ordered dismissed with corresponding accessory penalties.

Sekak, she said, violated government transaction rules by approving vouchers without supporting documents that led to the release of P12.7 million. She was also found to have been involved in the overpricing of medicines worth P5.78 million that were purchased without public bidding.

In the case of Cabantan, De Guzman acknowledged that many people had questioned the suspension order merely because the Toledo division superintendent did not release the performance evaluation result being requested by school teacher Babylonia Ubas.

Ubas had charged Cabantan of oppression and grave abuse of authority.

Explained de Guzman: "Ubas wrote Cabantan three times and he did not once answer her, in violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials."

The latest dismissals brought to seven the number of presidential appointees dismissed by the Palace.

clients claim victory

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not get the chance to present
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rse, PPI will avail of the reme-
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esiderio said.

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t a permanent injunction is be-
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cision on Tuesday, the Court of
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not agree that PEP or the other
were not given due process in
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portunity to be heard," Deside-

PEP Coalition was served
he proposed rehab plan. It was
n considerable time "within
ubmit their opposition or comments thereto. That was an opportunity which they did not avail of," he said.

Makati Judge Romeo Barza last year appointed a receiver to evaluate a rehabilitation plan for PPI based on the concerns of its creditors.

Under the proposed rehab plan, PPI's open-ended plans were to be exchanged for fixed-value plans that would mature in July 2010.

On another front, PPI was cleared of syndicated estafa charges filed against it by six plan holders in the Manila prosecutor's office.

In a decision issued on Sept. 25, assistant city prosecutor Elen Nagtalon-Tumaliuan dismissed, for lack of probable cause, the consolidated syndicated estafa complaint filed by six plan holders against some members of the Yuchengco family and other officers and directors of PPI.

Piccio said he and his group "would not stop filing" estafa cases against the Yuchengcos and PPI officials.

"They dismiss this now, three others will file new cases tomorrow in different places. If those are dismissed, three others will file new cases, and so on."

ws results by next year

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d the problem is that they (the for-
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bante said. "As soon as the duly-
ted bank (records are) secured, the
an will review the evidence and act accordingly."

According to Jimenez, Perez had demanded that he execute an affidavit against cronies of former President Joseph Estrada, which would be used against them if they would not support Ms Arroyo in the 2004 elections.

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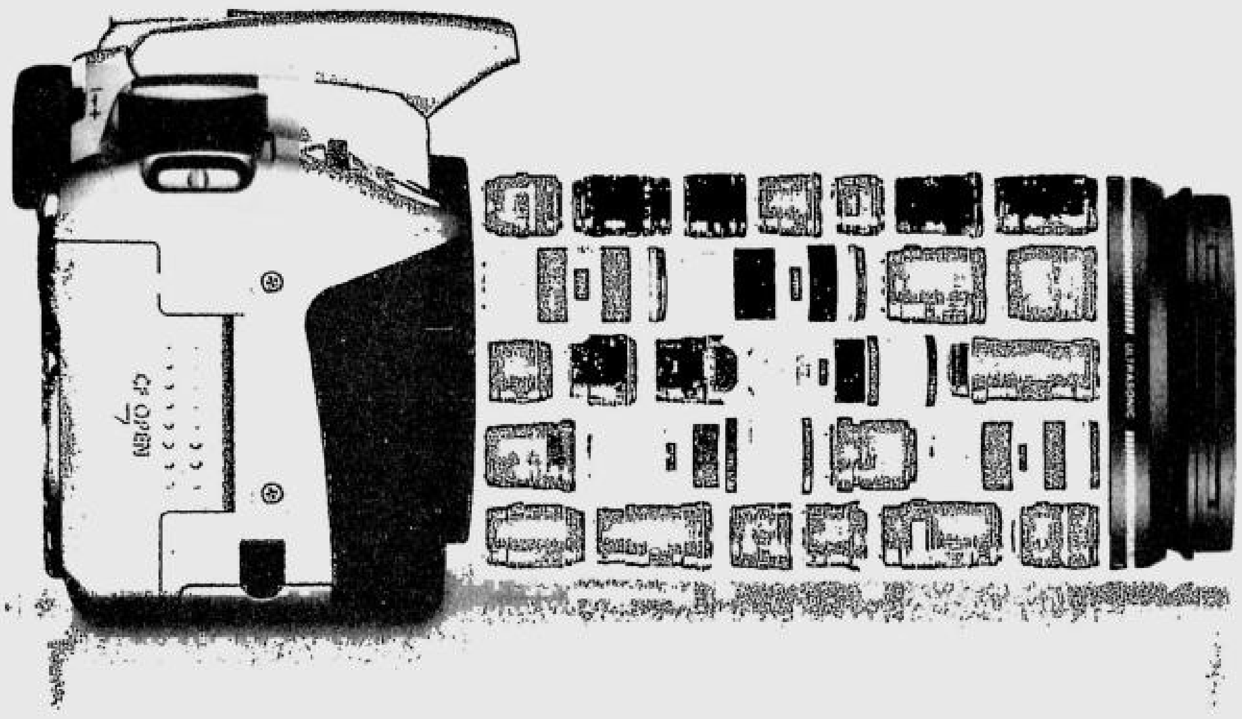

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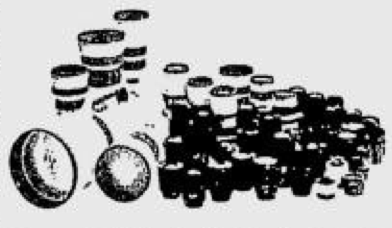

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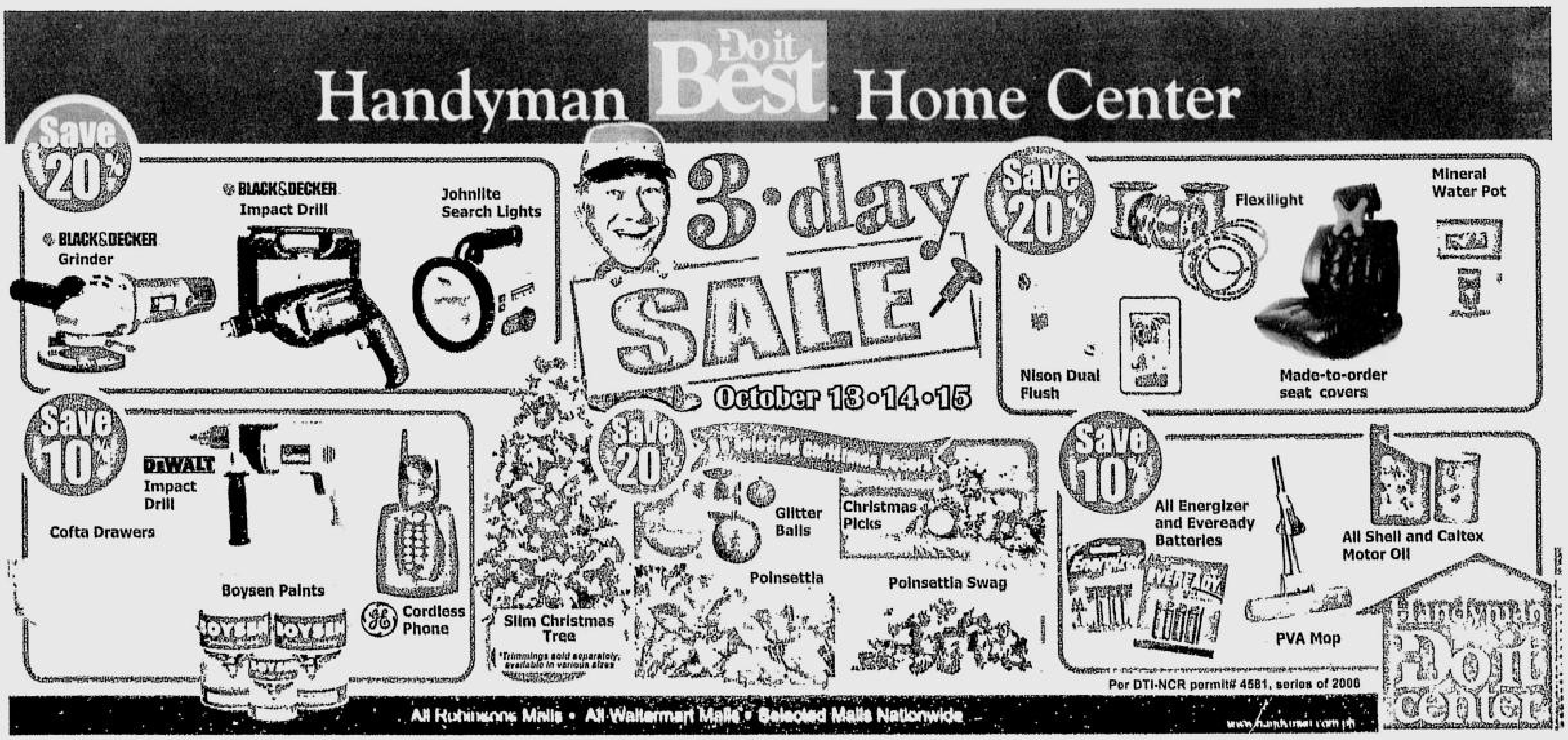
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Safeguards

EDITORIAL

HASTE MAKES FOR HYSTERIA, WHICH LEADS TO drafting of bad laws and an even worse security strategy. How haste can hamper sober conclusions is demonstrated by the eventual disclosure that the number of fatalities in the recent bombings in Makilala, North Cotabato, were overstated by 100 percent because, as Mayor Onofre Respicio later clarified, the same victims had been counted twice. This may seem a trivial matter, but in this country terrorism has always been measured by the body count. Get that wrong, and the government will either under- or overreact.

The bombs that have gone off in parts of Mindanao are a serious cause for concern. That they are being used to stampede the Senate into approving an antiterrorism bill should be a cause for equal anxiety.

The greatest intelligence achievement of this country—the discovery and investigation of the original plan to hijack commercial aircraft and turn them into kamikaze bombs—was accomplished without benefit of an antiterrorism law. Officials also do not need an antiterrorism law to move the oil depots out of Pandacan, Manila, which are a health and security risk.

Even as the country tightens its security precautions in the wake of international warnings and the bombings taking place in Mindanao, we must realize that if terrorist operations are in place, Congress is in no position to affect the outcome of those operations—or countermeasures by the authorities. If a terrorist plan is in place, even force-marching the Senate to approve a bill, and cracking the whip on a bicameral committee to resolve the differences between two versions of the bill cannot stop it. It is equally wrong to assume that what the House of Representatives has passed is a bill of such outstanding quality that it doesn't need further debate, amendment and improvement.

The challenges being made to the proposed provisions of an antiterror law are serious. The argument, for example, that concern over long detention periods is mere quibbling because the United Kingdom permits something similar, is as intellectually dishonest as it is mentally lazy. In the first place, while the British parliament did approve a rather draconian measure, the law is subject to annual reenactment—and thus, debate and review—by Parliament. The argument also takes for granted something Filipinos cannot assume: a fully functional, human rights-conscious judicial system unafraid to buck public opinion, as when the House of Lords (sitting as the highest court) ruled in favor of an appeal by nine detainees in 2004.

In the United States, the Patriot Act is facing a serious challenge in the courts, while additional legislation increasing the US president's powers has become a midterm election issue. Some opposition candidates have vowed to work for the repeal of the Patriot Act if they are elected to Congress.

We must bear in mind that the administration trying to panic Congress into passing the law is the same administration that proclaimed the February 2004 bombing of the Superferry 14 as an accident. Indeed, President Macapagal-Arroyo said it was the work of "pranksters." She and other officials only admitted that it was what everyone thought it was—the country's worst terrorist attack—in October, after she had claimed victory in the May 2004 elections. Yet four weeks after the bombing, Redondo Cain Dellosa, alias Arnulfo Alvarado, had been captured by investigators and confessed he had planted the bomb where it would inflict the greatest number of casualties. The Abu Sayyaf claimed credit, but the government laughed it off—until after the elections. Even then, the President claimed six suspects had been caught, though the two masterminds evaded apprehension.

We must consider, too, that no antiterrorism law can help in capturing Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadaffy Janjalani when even a $5-million reward offered by the United States cannot achieve the same objective.

There are many reasons our foreign allies want an antiterrorism law, and not all of them are selfish. There are many justifications, too, for our Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police to have better legal tools to investigate terrorists. But there are equally compelling and vital arguments for insisting that such an antiterrorism law should be of limited duration and subject to an annual review and reenactment by Congress, just as we would like to see a genuine system for congressional oversight over the AFP and the police to discourage abuses.

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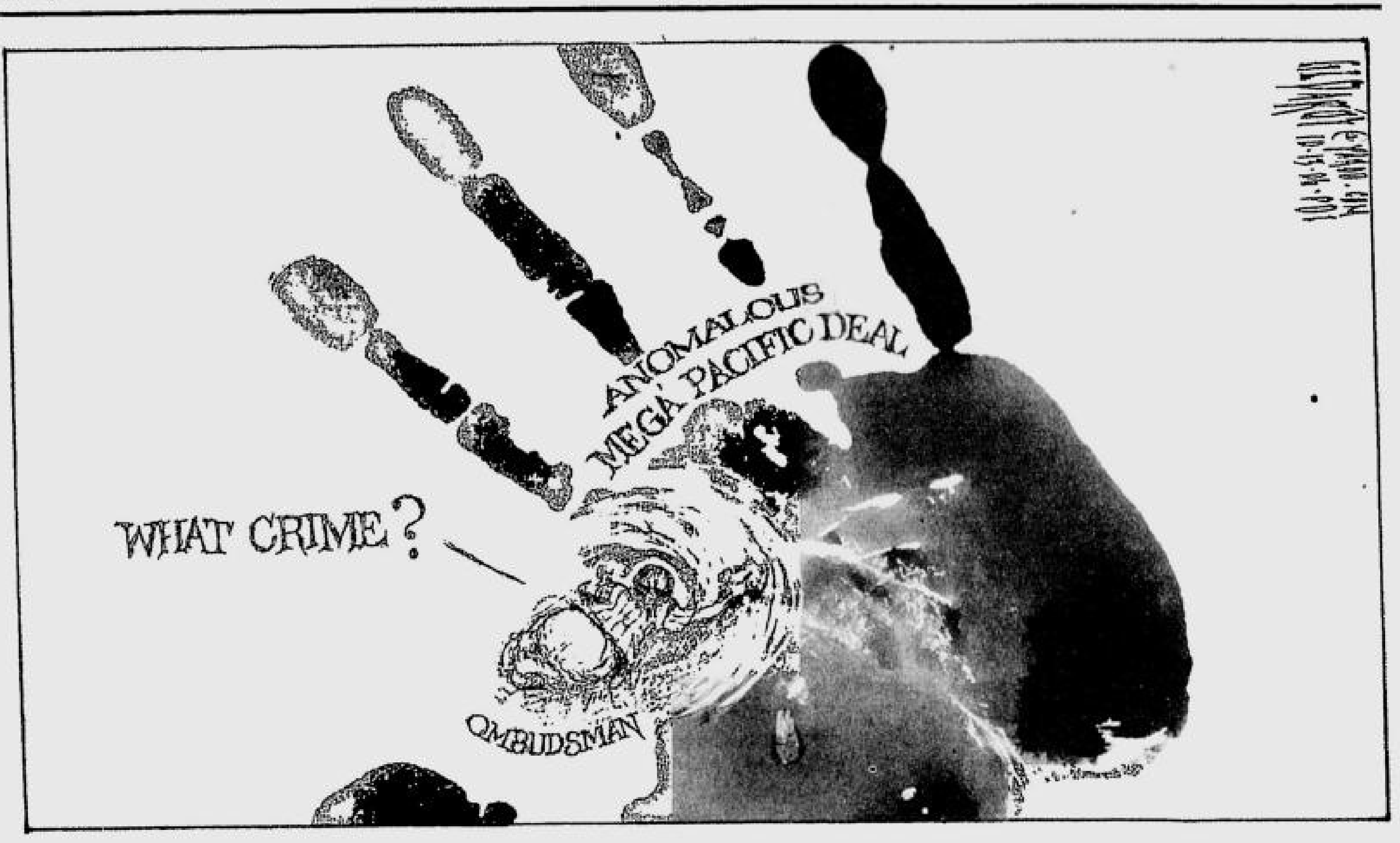


Napocor Mafia delaying its privatization

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

OUR CONSTITUTION MANDATES THE GOVERNMENT to prevent monopolies, cartels and other restraints in trade. That was the reason the Oil Deregulation Law was passed by Congress during the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos. The law encouraged many oil players to compete in the downstream oil market which used to be monopolized by three big oil companies: Petron, Shell and Caltex. Competition among many oil firms would force prices down, the reasoning went.

Putting up a new oil company is no mean feat. You need lots of capital and time. So enough transition time should have been given to the new players to set up their business before price controls were lifted, like what other countries that also deregulated their oil industries did and are still doing.

But what did Ramos do? He made the Oil Deregulation Law a farce by reducing—by his own lonesome self—the transition period to a mere two months (in other countries, it took many years). This gave the Big Three an excuse to raise their prices at will before the competitors were in a position to compete seriously. So instead of competitors, we attracted small trading firms that bought their petroleum products from the Big Three and sold them to the public, with the Big Three still dictating the prices.

The present wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) is supposed to operate on the same principle: competition. It is like the international spot market for crude oil and petroleum products. It uses the concept of a "pool" where all electricity outputs from generators are centrally coordinated. Generators as well as buyers of bulk electricity compete for a share of this pool, to be dispatched and scheduled to meet the electricity demand in real time. That way, the WESM encourages competition in generation.

With competition as the driving factor, gains from the resulting efficiency are expected to come in the short and long term. In the short term, efficiency will result from pressures in electricity businesses to reduce costs, align prices and tariffs with costs, and use their assets more efficiently. In the longer term, as new competitors emerge in wholesale power generation, the efficiency gains are more likely to be more substantial.

The WESM is a product of the Epira law which was copied from the California model which used to be very successful in reducing the cost of electricity. But the Epira law, like the Oil Deregulation Law, is good only in theory. It fails when it is not implemented correctly. Both are supposed to combat monopolies and cartels by encouraging competition. But how can you lower prices when an industry is still dominated by a cartel, as in the oil industry, or a monopoly, as in the power sector? Oil is still dominated by the Big Three which control at least 80 percent of the Philippine market, and power is dominated by the National Power Corp. which provides from 70 to 80 percent of power. These firms, therefore, still manipulate prices.

The two laws provide for regulatory bodies to supervise the oil and power markets. But officials of the Department of Energy behave as if they are employees of the Big Three.

The Philippine Electricity Market Corp. (PEMC), the operator of the new Philippine wholesale electricity spot market, is only now getting its baptism of fire. It suspects the Napocor and the Power Sector Assets Liabilities and Management Corp. (PSALM), the government agency in charge of selling Napocor's power plants and electricity grid, of manipulating prices in the spot market that resulted in sudden spikes in power bills of factories and households in Luzon when there was no visible reason for them.

The Napocor has four trading companies, created primarily to peddle its energy in the spot market. But with the Napocor providing the biggest chunk of the market's energy, the four trading companies are easily manipulated by the Napocor Mafia. Aside from the fact that it still has bilateral contracts that dictate the pricing mechanism for transmission and distribution, the Napocor can easily lower its prices below the actual rate set in the WESM because it is subsidized by the government.

Bear in mind, however, that subsidy means an additional burden to the Filipinos because all subsidies in the books of the Napocor are considered losses. And any and all losses are the Filipino people's liability.

The WESM was scheduled to be operational in 2003, or two years after the Epira law was passed, and after at least 70 percent of Napocor's power plants have been sold. But five years after, PSALM has sold only 3 percent of Napocor's power plants.

Industry circles claim that the WESM will not work under the present setup because of the monopoly of the Napocor. And the Napocor Mafia appears to have succeeded in delaying Napocor's privatization efforts by making it unfeasible in the eyes of interested buyers. Why would anyone want to compete in an industry dominated by a government monopoly that can even manipulate the spot market?

There is one effective way to promote competitiveness: privatize Napocor! Aside from encouraging competition, privatization is the only way to prevent a power crisis that will hit us in three to five years.

Napocor's privatization will encourage local and foreign investors to take part in the power industry by upgrading and/or building new power plants to augment the increasing demand for power.

It is the Napocor Mafia that keeps investors away from the power industry.

Blind man's gambit: hoodlums and rogues

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

THERE USED TO BE FIVE "ROGUE STATES" that threatened world peace and were impervious to reason: Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Iran and North Korea.

Iraq and Afghanistan are now off the list—the United States simply invaded them. Libya has taken to diplomacy, though it continues to wreak havoc in Africa. And Iran, it is said, continues to be a threat, but it's just that US President George W. Bush, no spelling bee champ, sort of invaded Iraq instead.

That leaves us with North Korea, part of Bush's "Axis of Evil," with the fourth largest military in the world and where nearly 23 percent of the country's GDP goes to military spending. Of those troops, 1.2 million are stationed within 65 kilometers of the famous "38th parallel" that separates the impoverished communist North and the prosperous, democratic South.

Nowhere can you feel its sinister presence more than in Seoul, capital of the South, barely 45 kilometers away from the demarcation line drawn in the 1954 armistice that ended the Korean war. It is the most heavily guarded border in the world, described by former US President Bill Clinton as "the scariest place on earth." The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) is a strip of no man's land, a 248-km line averaging 4-km wide, where almost two million troops face each other, ready to square off at a moment's notice.

The best evidence of Seoul's vibrant economy is that the DMZ is actually a tourist destination, the highlight of the tour being the deep long tunnel under the DMZ that the North Koreans had been digging and which, by the time it was accidentally discovered, had already penetrated the other side.

Unbeknownst to many, the Philippines has actually played a vital role in this half-century stand-off. During the Korean war in 1950-53, Filipino troops went to Korea under the UN flag, including a young West Point graduate named Fidel Ramos. Very recently, the Philippines helped defuse tension when North Korean refugees sought diplomatic asylum in the South Korean embassy in China. Given diplomatic niceties—to save the refugees without anyone "losing face"—the North Koreans were brought first to Manila before they were flown to Seoul. Manila obliged, as a country of first asylum, a crisis was quietly averted, and the refugees did overcome.

Since Pyongyang admitted that it had a nuclear program in October 2002, it has called the United Nations' bluff, kicked out UN inspectors and pulled out of a nuclear non-proliferation treaty. This week, however, a strange mushroom cloud was detected by satellites, accompanied by extraordinary tremors in North Korean mountains. Pyongyang sheepishly claimed that these were part of a demolition for the construction of a hydroelectric plant.

Nobody believed it, which is not surprising since the explanation came from Kim Jong-il, son and successor to Pyongyang's founder. He has alarmed the world, and with reason. Elsewhere, nuclear proliferation, though inherently a menace, may have unwittingly preserved the peace between long-time adversaries India and Pakistan. But North Korea portends a unique mischief, a rogue with nuclear weapons.

Five nations—the United States, China, Russia, Japan and South Korea—now wish to curb Kim Jong-il's nuclear ambitions and are poised, though in different degrees, to use the UN Security Council's enforcement powers, called the Chapter VII powers in international law.

Pyongyang says all it wants is a formal promise by the United States on non-aggression, which is perfectly understandable, given Bush's bellicose talk and America's historical record. On the other hand, the United States is asking the UN to compel Pyongyang to submit—under pain of military enforcement—to UN inspections of all cargo in and out of North Korea to intercept weapons-related shipments. China and Russia hedge on sanctions but still call on North Korea to stand down.

Clinton has already tried the gentlest option of giving Pyongyang the security assurances it seeks, in exchange for dismantling its nuclear program. It has failed owing to Pyongyang's duplicity. For instance, North Korea received fuel supplies to replace the projected energy shortfall, yet continued with its nuclear program.

Bush now presents to the UN the armed option of launching full-scale military strikes, but we all dread the conflagration that will follow.

In between the extremes of appeasement and war, however, is an economic embargo, including the cut-off of vital food aid, and an escalated arms race from Pyongyang's threatened neighbors, the danger that in the first place nuclear nonproliferation had sought to stop.

South Korea has long hoped for national reunification, poignantly building railroad links to the North, but which for now stop at the 38th parallel, all the while anxiously watching Germany's transition, costly to say the least, after the Berlin Wall collapsed.

It is possible that Pyongyang's nuclear test is merely intended as a bargaining chip to be traded in for foreign aid on which it has relied through famine and perennial shortages. We, the Asian neighbors who will have to live under the mushroom cloud that, God forbid, will contaminate the Pacific skies for decades on end, fret that given Pyongyang's strange temper, threats will only spring things out of control.

Kim Jong-il has played the blind man's gambit to the hilt. In that classic game, a man tries in vain to cross a busy frenzied road, but cars won't yield. Next, he dons dark glasses and carries a walking stick—and every rational driver stops and gives way to the "blind man." Kim has played the unreasoning rogue, and with his weird pompadour and high-heeled shoes, he is truly very scary.

There's life after the Internet

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THIS IS A SEQUEL TO LAST MONDAY'S ARTIcle which painted a dim picture of the newspaper industry which is being threatened by the Internet as a source of news.

The debate in the newspaper community provoked by the article in The Economist on the "death of newspapers" has been so spirited that, within weeks of its publication, contrary opinions have sprung. One such article in a foreign newspaper had the headline, "Papers can withstand Net growth" (more of this later). I must say that I did not pick up that story from any website. But from the INQUIRER website (www.inq7.net), there was a story last week about the Philippine Senate facing life-threatening pressure from the administration's campaign to shift to the parliamentary system.

That puts the Senate and the newspapers in the same boat, as endangered species. But between the two institutions, which are said to be key foundations in a democracy, which will be missed more if it disappeared? Both the newspapers and the Senate have love-hate relations. The press uses Congress and its members as a source of information while it is used by members of Congress as a springboard for self-publicity.

This week, the Senate is celebrating its 90th anniversary, after its creation in 1916 by the Jones Law, a stratagem of Manuel L. Quezon to upstage the speaker of the House, Rep. Sergio Osmeña, in their rivalry for domination of Philippine politics in the run-up to independence. During the celebration, the Senate hall was resonant with oratory from senators extolling themselves and their historic role in the development of Philippine democracy, and with nostalgia recalling the glory days of their eminent members (of which there are now so few).

Their celebration falls in the shadow of the threats of their abolition from the House-driven Charter-change campaign. This circumstance underlines the resurfacing of that historic Quezon-Osmeña and Senate-House cleavage.

The worst nemesis of the Senate is neither the House nor President Macapagal-Arroyo. Its lethal assassins are embedded in the Senate itself: in the deadly vendettas among its members. For example, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and Sen. Jamby Madrigal, have been at each other's throats over issues whose import to bigger public interest remains unclear to the general public.

Because of these intramurals, some skeletons in the closet have been uncovered during the Senate debates. Former Sen. Rene Saguisag, who is not known to be careless with his facts, has asked the Senate to inquire into a conflict of interest in Enrile's efforts to investigate Philcomsat, and this is bound to test the Senate leadership itself. Of late, Enrile has taken an aura of invincibility. And this posture is now under attack from his colleagues such as Pimentel, who has no love lost for Enrile, who was his jailer during martial law, and Madrigal, whom Enrile bullies.

The Senate does not need President Arroyo to undermine it. It has been undermining itself with the abusive behavior of its members and the great number of investigations it has spent on issues that have little to do with legislation.

The Senate seems to derive inspiration from a classic model, the Roman Senate, which was also teeming with assassins (remember Julius Caesar). Whether it will survive beyond 2010 is hard to predict.

Historical records, however, show that the printed word has a longer survival life span than the Senate as an institution. The printed word, preserved by the medieval monks, survived the barbarian invasions of Europe, while the Roman Empire (with its Senate) did not. From this perspective, the newspapers (the modern custodian of the printed word) are certain to outlive the Philippine Senate.

With regard to the threat posed by the Internet, the Australian Press Council said yesterday that newspapers do have a future despite the rise—and rise—of the Internet as an information source.

The Australian newspaper reported on a study on the state of the news print media in Australia, which found that it is an "exacting risky time" for Australian media companies and admitted that the best business model to ensure the continued prosperity of newspapers in the face of the seismic shift in technology isn't obvious.

Despite some "horrific" circulation figures coming out of the United States and United Kingdom, Australian Press Council chair, professor Ken McKinnon, said that claims of the imminent demise of newspapers are "vastly exaggerated." The study found that metropolitan newspaper circulation in Australia peaked between 1975 and 1985, and has since declined by about one-fifth. However, it also found that sales and readership numbers have been stable for two years and that Sunday newspaper sales are increasing.

The report found that with regard to content, crime is still the most popular newspaper topic, constituting 14.5 percent of all stories analyzed and 15.7 percent of all Page 1 stories. The second most popular topics were federal politics and entertainment (12.1 percent of all stories), and third were accidents and emergencies (10.7 percent).

McKinnon said newspaper companies "should ensure their main mission by ensuring public events are capable of being reported on by all media."

Learn the right lessons

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SINCE THERE WERE NINE OF US SIBLINGS, our parents often resorted to wholesale discipline to keep order in the family. When something got broken, or an item was missing, or even when a squabble erupted among us, the younger batch (to whom I belonged) would be summoned and lined up for punishment. Regardless of individual guilt or responsibility, we would all receive the same punishment: a tongue-lashing and a quick pinch in the most sensitive part of the body.

We all felt aggrieved, of course, and blamed each other, and resented our parents for not even trying to get to the bottom of the incident. In their view, it seemed to us, it was far more convenient to mete out punishment to all the suspects equally. Not for them the adage about how it would be better to let the guilty go free rather than punish the innocent.

Maybe President Macapagal-Arroyo is of the same parenting school as my late parents. Maybe she thinks everyone who took the nursing board exams this year shares equal responsibility with the few who cheated and took advantage of leaked test questions to improve their chances of passing the test. And that's why she's "punishing" everyone by nullifying the results of the exams and requiring everyone to take the test again.

But I'm sure such wholesale punishment doesn't sit well with the examinees, much as my parents' brand of discipline didn't foster unity and mutual responsibility among us siblings. It only taught us to conceal our misdemeanors better.

Protests and pickets have erupted in various parts of the country, led by exam-takers who feel they are being unjustly punished for the wrongdoing of a few cheaters.

At the same time, Professional Regulation Commission Chair Leonor Tripon-Rosero has added her voice to the chorus of protest. It had been her position, from the beginning of this controversy, that a mere recalculation of scores by negating the questionable parts of the test was enough to undo the damage done by the leaked questions.

* * *

BUT there's more to the leak than just test scores and the licensing of unqualified nurses.

There's the reputation not just of Filipino nurses but of all health care professionals, and the reputation of the Philippines, particularly the reliability of our licensure processes.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, who has been given administrative power over the PRC, says even foreign governments have aired concerns about the qualifications of Filipino health personnel. A representative of the Japanese government, he said, had expressed its concern since a recent agreement between the two governments would allow Filipino nurses and caregivers to work in Japan for the first time. Even the governments of the European Union have been asking questions, he said.

As for the United States, as reported in this column, American authorities have postponed making a decision on whether to allow the administration of a state qualifying nursing exam in the Philippines, pending the results of the investigation into the nursing test leaks. Is this likewise an indication of a lack of confidence in the skills of Filipino nurses, or at least on the capacity of the government to guarantee the integrity of nursing boards?

* * *

THERE'S a conflict here between the rights of the "honest" exam takers, who certainly don't deserve to be punished alongside the cheaters, and the need to protect the reputation of the country's nurses and licensing bodies. What should prevail? And should individual rights (of the examinees) be sacrificed for the sake of the national reputation?

The NBI which had been requested by the PRC to conduct an investigation into the leakage, has concluded its probe and named the perpetrators: 17 officials of three review centers, though no names of either officials or review centers have been released thus far.

NBI Director Nestor Mantaring has cleared PRC officials of involvement in the leak, and said the investigators found evidence of a leak only in Manila and Baguio. He also said that "it would be very hard to pinpoint who benefited," because some exam takers who were provided with the leaked test questions may have chosen not to take advantage of them.

But the NBI has already identified the review centers which took advantage of the leak, and it should take only a short investigative leap to determine who among the examinees had patronized these review centers and attended their review sessions. Then it should only be a matter of comparing the examinees' performance in the questionable parts of the test with their performance in the other tests to see if they indeed used the leak to their advantage.

* * *

ADMITTEDLY, this would take a lot more time and effort, and Malacañang has already said it wanted to wrap up the matter as soon as possible.

But determining who cheated and who did not is not just a matter of determining who should retake the test and who won't have to. It's also a matter of basic justice, of punishing the guilty and letting go—or in this case, licensing—the innocent.

It also seems to me a fair solution to the conflicting claims of the innocent exam-takers and those concerned about the reputation of Filipino nurses and the state of nursing education here.

Certainly, let's go after the review centers and their owners and officials who paid for the leaked questions and passed these on to their students. Let's also identify who these students are and require them to take the nursing board exam all over again, if only to determine if they are indeed qualified to work as nurses. But let's also not punish those who studied for the exam and relied on their own intellect, memory and experience to get a passing grade.

Let's make sure everyone learns the right lesson this time.

India's illiterate revolution

WORLD VIEW

Arindam Chaudhuri

THE UNITED STATES HAS LONG BEEN DIVIDED over what it calls "affirmative action," a system of racial preferences intended to overcome the lingering consequences of slavery and discrimination against black Americans. India is now becoming divided in much the same way, and for much the same reason: the emerging system of "reserved places" aimed at redressing centuries of caste discrimination. But India's good intentions, like America's affirmative action policies, are misguided.

The underlying question is whether merit as a criterion for advancement is doomed when legacies of racial and caste discrimination exist. Are those who agitate for affirmative action fighting for something that is more a quack remedy than a real solution?

In fact, India's "reserved places" scheme operates as a deliberate smokescreen, for it allows the government cleverly to mask the real issue, which is access to primary education for India's disadvantaged. Were adequate primary education available to India's poor—or, for that matter, to America's poor urban blacks—there would be no need for reserved places in higher education and elsewhere.

Indeed, any Indian able to read this article should consider himself lucky, because India's politicians have succeeded in keeping a majority of the country's population thoroughly illiterate (as well as poor and unhealthy). Instead of providing quality elementary education for all, our policymakers are more concerned with enacting caste-based measures aimed at short-term political gains.

Since India gained independence 58 years ago, billions of rupees have been doled-out in numerous educational policies, but general primary education remains abysmal. According to a report released by the National Institute for Educational Planning Administration (NIEPA) in 2005, 8.1 percent of primary schools in India have no classrooms, while 17.5 percent have only one teacher. In addition, 76.2 percent of schools do not have clean drinking water, while 14.6 percent lack electricity. Less than 4 percent of all primary schools have computers.

Likewise, the Mumbai-based NGO Pratham's Annual Status of Education Report 2005, which was prepared after a survey in 28 states and union territories, reveals that 35 percent of children in the 7-14 age group are unable to read simple paragraphs, while 41 percent failed to solve a simple two-digit subtraction problem or a division problem. Instead of preparing a pool of educated workers for the future, the government's policies have given rise to an illiterate and innumerate population.

These findings raise damning suspicions about the literacy levels that successive Indian governments have claimed to achieve. If the state of primary education is this bad, will the disadvantaged classes ever stand a chance? Moreover, according to Vinod Raina, a member of the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), 80 million of India's 200 million children between 6 and 14 years of age are not in school at all. Of the remaining 120 million, only 20 million are expected to reach the 10th year of school, with the rest dropping out along the way. Indeed, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh recently expressed dismay over the fact that "only 47 out of 100 children enrolled in class I reach class VIII."

The government has pledged in its National Common Minimum Program to raise public expenditure on education to 6 percent of GDP. However, recent years have witnessed a steady decline in educational spending, from 4 percent of GDP in 2000-02 to 3.8 percent in 2002-04 and 3.5 percent in 2004-05.

Quality education is the single greatest asset that a nation can give to its people. It also happens to be the least expensive and most cost-effective support that government can provide. But Indian politicians' interests appear to lie elsewhere. After all, with the rate of functional literacy at only 37.5 percent, they can easily manipulate the votes of uneducated people with alcohol, pop slogans and intimidation.

So the protests by highly educated Indians against "reserved places" is not only wrongheaded, but dangerous as well. Unless India's highly educated stand up for better schools for all, protests against caste preferences will only succeed in heightening tensions and selling newspapers, rather than improving the lives of India's destitute.

The government is probably happy with these protests, for they divert attention from the real issue: the authorities' utter failure to address the fundamental problem. As in America, the issue is not racial and class reservations and preferences, but ensuring high-quality primary education for all, rich and poor alike. As India's educated revolt against preferences, they should not do so in a way that reinforces illiteracy. ***Project Syndicate***

Arindam Chaudhuri is honorary dean at the Indian Institute of Planning and Management and editor in chief of Business & Economy Magazine.

300 million Americans

DEMOGRAPHERS ESTIMATE THAT SOME TIME THIS month, the population of the United States will reach 300 million. The demographic event is being looked at as a milestone, a time for reflection.

Among the major social developments that are being discussed, sometimes even hotly debated, are immigration, the shrinking household size, the rise of the women's participation in the labor force and the impact of population growth on the environment.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Some of those issues concern Filipinos as well, because of our close ties to the United States, and the fact that we have some two million Filipinos living there, most of them as US citizens and permanent residents. I looked at some 20 feature articles and editorials from different American newspapers, large and small, conservative and liberal, to see how they are thinking about their being 300 million.

White fright

Other developed countries have seen their population growth slowing down, some even registering negative rates, leading to concerns about a "demographic winter" or a large elderly population. The United States is not likely to see this demographic winter because its population is still growing rapidly, through both natural increase and immigration.

American demographers note that the United States reached 100 million in 1915. In 1967, the US population reached 200 million. That was 52 years in between milestones. To reach the 300-million mark it took a shorter interval of 39 years.

America raced to its 200-million mark mainly through a baby boom, the increase in births after World War II. Immigration had dropped, and had consisted mainly of Europeans. In the 1960s, however, immigration picked up again, with large numbers coming in from Latin America and from Asia, including the Philippines. Immigration speeded up the rate of population growth to the present 300 million. Although migration itself is not part of natural increase, once they settle in, the new migrants do have a higher birth rate than the majority white population.

The changing color of migration has led to what some American newspapers describe as "white fright," a perception that non-whites might soon outnumber whites. Even today, whites are already a minority in California, Texas, New Mexico and Hawaii.

Minorities

A recent Pew Research Center survey showed that more than half of the US population over the age of 50 (the baby boomers) believe that immigrants are a burden because they take away jobs, and add to the burden of housing and health care.

But perceptions do not always correspond to realities. Non-white Americans are still a minority, albeit a growing one. Many take on jobs that white Americans find too menial. And new migrants tend to be ambitious and fiercely independent, working (and spending) hard to achieve the American dream.

Minorities constitute a third of the US population, the largest groups being African-Americans, Hispanics and Asians. African-Americans are growing at a rate of only 1.3 percent each year, almost all of this due to births rather than immigrants. In contrast, Asian-Americans are growing at 3 percent each year, the increase due more to new immigrants than to births alone. Among Asian migrants, Filipinos rank second in number, after the Chinese.

The largest minority group are the Hispanics, defined as anyone with ancestral connections to Spain and which includes all Latin Americans. The Hispanics are growing at a rate of 3.3 percent per year, through both natural increase and immigration. Some of the newspaper articles I read speculated that the 300 millionth American would probably be Hispanic, and that the United States would have a Hispanic-American president in the not too distant future.

Other observers say it may take a while before we see a president from among the minority groups because even if they are growing rapidly, they still have much less access to political power than white Americans.

Ecological footprint

All too often, the American press describes overpopulation as a Third World problem. For a change, this "300 millionth American" event has been used to look into what a large American population will mean for the environment, their own as well as that of the world.

This is where some debates are going on. An editorial in The Wall Street Journal by Stephen Moore calls for a celebration: "We 300 million Americans are on balance healthier and wealthier and freer than any population ever... Every natural resource we depend on—water, food, copper and, yes even oil—is far more abundant today, measured by affordability, than when our population was 100 million or even 30 million." Moore attributes all this to the American "free market capitalist system."

Moore is clearly a disciple of the late economist Julian Simon, whom he cites and praises. Simon, incidentally, is also frequently cited by groups in the Philippines who oppose family planning. These groups claim that a large population is good for our economy because we then have more consumers, and more people to export. Not surprisingly, American conservatives, including Filipino-Americans, have been lobbying the US government to cut support for family planning overseas, claiming that there is no population problem in America, or in the world.

Not everyone agrees with this view. Several of the articles I reviewed refer to the Americans' "ecological footprint," the amount of land and water needed to support an individual, in terms of resources of survival as well as space for the waste generated. One estimate is that each American's ecological footprint is 24 acres (9.7 hectares), given current consumption patterns. Environmentalist groups call on Americans to become more socially aware and responsible, especially since the resources being consumed often involve those of other countries.

The debates are likely to continue, shaping policies that impact on many countries, including the Philippines, from the quotas we get each year for immigrants, to the level of funding given by the US government to international family planning programs and, yes, to the political situation in the Middle East.

A small newspaper from California, the Merced Sun-Star, asks Americans to think about the demographic facts and figures and to ask the questions "about who we are; what we hope to achieve; how we can improve the lives of a large, poor minority amid so much plenty; and how to improve relations with the rest of the world and with each other."

It's encouraging to read articles like this, as America moves on to its "400 millionth American" milestone, estimated to come in 2043. Maybe with time, we'll hear many more such voices, especially from minority Americans, including Filipinos, who become Americans without losing memories of their roots, and of the need for global citizenship. The US demographic milestones are, after all, global ones as well.

RP should not pay illegal debts

THE FREEDOM FROM DEBT COALITION joins the global debt movement in praising the unilateral decision of the Norwegian government to cancel without conditions $80 million in illegitimate debts "owed" by five countries: Ecuador, Egypt, Peru, Jamaica and Sierra Leone.

Doubtless, this is a momentous victory not only to the resilient debt movement but more importantly, to the peoples of the world who are greatly suffering from the burden of illegitimate debts. We applaud the efforts of the different debt movements, particularly the anti-debt advocates in Norway, in convincing their government to cancel illegitimate debts and essentially admit responsibility for a failed development initiative (the flawed 1976-1980 Norwegian Ship Export Campaign) wherein 21 countries were eventually thrust into a vicious debt trap.

Both the Norwegian government and its civil society counterparts must be praised not only for doing the right thing but also for their political courage amid strong opposition by the international creditor community.

Norway's decision is a step forward in acknowledging the concept of illegitimate debts—debts that were incurred by dictators to finance ill-conceived development projects, or entered into under fraudulent contracts and corrupt practices. Second, this decision has broken the firm assertion by the global creditor community that poor countries must repay all their debts at all costs. Lastly, it sets a historic precedent for lenders to admit responsibility and liability for plunging many poor nations into the deadly cycle of debt.

The Philippine government can learn a thing or two from this development. Instead of pursuing a dimwitted policy of religiously paying all our debts (of which many are illegitimate) down to the last centavo, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her administration should join the global discourse on lender responsibility and the campaign against illegitimate debts.

We challenge the Arroyo administration to stop appropriating money for the payment of the interest and principal of the Marcos debts, which are obviously illegitimate. We challenge Ms Arroyo to immediately investigate and review all compromise deals entered into by the Presidential Commission on Good Government and other government agencies. Lastly, we dare the Senate to pass Senate Resolution No. 1 calling for the creation of a Congressional Debt Audit Commission that will be responsible for the investigation and audit of all public debts.

The best way to recognize and celebrate the virtuous action of the Norwegian government in canceling the illegitimate debts of poor nations is for us to reciprocate with the same courage. We can start by refusing to pay the country's illegitimate debts, particularly all the Marcos debts.

—ANA MARIA R. NEMENZO,
president,
Freedom from Debt Coalition,
11 Matimpiin St.,
Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City

Bulk of GSIS' PR budget spent on ads

NOT THAT WE ARE COMPLAINING. BUT one could not help but ask how the Government Service Insurance System suddenly became the apple of INQUIRER columnist Honesto General's eye. In fact, five of his last 10 columns involved the GSIS. One can also notice his penchant for resurrecting age-old issues—from the eCard, pension and, just recently, the GSIS' public relations budget.

Just like what we explained to the public two years ago, we would like to inform General that the bulk of the P151-million PR budget the GSIS used in 2004 went into tri-media advertising. But being in the media, General is not clueless on how costly the business of information dissemination has become these days.

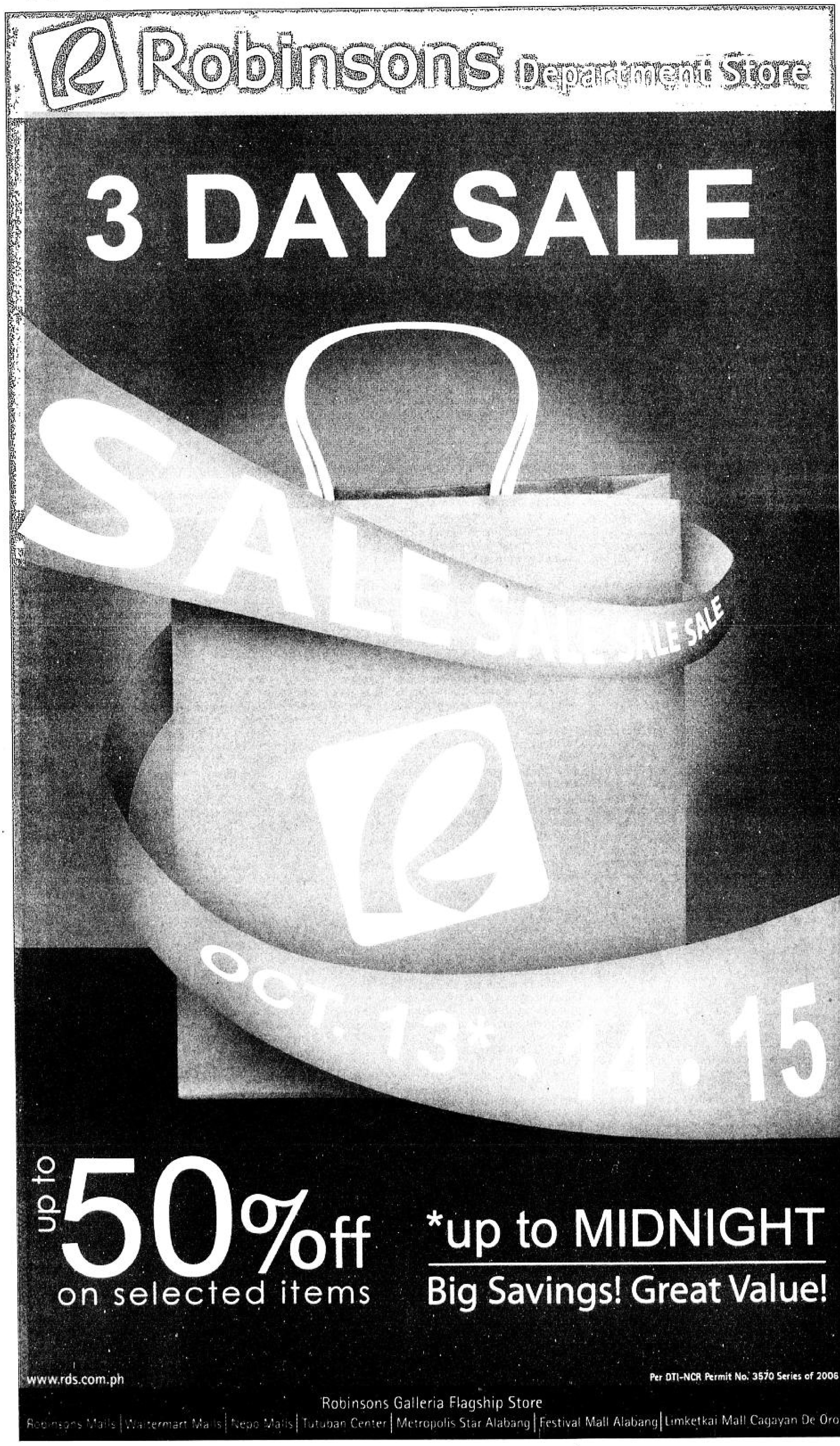
General also quoted the textbook definition of PR: "Doing good and telling people about it." This thought, in itself, explains the costs the GSIS incurred for its PR in 2004. For General's information, 2004 was the year the GSIS started doing "something good" because that was the year the GSIS began implementing its no-nonsense reform program. Changes in policies and procedures were being corrected from top to bottom, and it was incumbent upon the GSIS to keep the public, especially its more than 1.3 million members, in the loop.

We also would like to point out to General that the GSIS' publics are not limited to GSIS members and pensioners. Dependents of GSIS members—who receive hospitalization discounts and affordable non-life insurance—also form part of the GSIS' publics.

Soon, should the transportation department approve the GSIS' proposal to cover third-party liability for private vehicles, the GSIS would also need to communicate to the general public about the benefits of the GSIS' uncomplicated, inexpensive and corruption-free CTPL program.

We hope General would help us spread the word on this, so that we could save up on information dissemination costs.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA,
vice president, Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City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Nothing's new

THIRTEEN YEARS OF PRESENTATION OF evidence on the case was not enough to convince the court that heard the tax evasion case against Lucio Tan. Maybe 40 years or more will finally convince the court. In some criminal cases, the defendants have already served 40 years in prison. Justice?

Mere pronouncement of innocence does not serve justice. Speedy disposition does.

Well, this is the Philippines after all. Nothing's new.— **Joseph Umadhay, Cebu City (via e-mail)**

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

* * *

Contemptible! Outrageous! Repugnant! Extremely obtrusive!

Those are the kindest words I can say of the way this government is being run by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her family. We can only imagine the pressure former Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo had to deal with before he finally resigned to give way to Merceditas Gutierrez.

The findings of the Ombudsman's own Field Investigation Office have been ignored and unceremoniously disregarded to accommodate Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and company. This is part of the payback President Arroyo is making for the help she got to get where she is now.

These paybacks have been costing the Filipino people and future generations a fortune. Money and the lust for power are the engines that drive Ms Arroyo and her family (official and otherwise) to transgress what Filipinos hold dear, the rule of law, which has been replaced by the reign of greed.

"There is nothing in the world so demoralizing as money," said Sophocles, the Greek writer.

The P728-million fertilizer fund, the missing OWWA funds, the dissipation of $680 million in recovered Marcos loot, the expanded VAT revenues, etc., etc.—these mind-boggling sums are being lost or spent to buy the acquiescence or support of the majority of Congress to help keep a pretender in power; satisfy or mollify subservient or rebellious military and police officers; blackmail or buy judges; fill the deep pockets of graft court officials or ease out incorruptible ones.

We can only hope that the Supreme Court stands by its word and sticks to its original decision. Those men in robes are our last hope for maintaining a semblance of law. It would be the height of folly if they decided to reverse their own ruling. If I may paraphrase Sophocles, "How dreadful it would be when the right judges go wrong."—**Ramon A. Mayuga, Germany (via e-mail)**

* * *

The appreciation of the peso is one indicator that our economy is improving, and yet we complain about it. However, I hear more complaints from my countrymen when the peso depreciates, which shows we'd rather have a strong peso than a weak one. We all have to come to terms with the rate eventually.

Unpredictability of the exchange rate is something everyone worries about, not only exporters. Let us accept the rate and make adjustments accordingly.

Sure, the peso appreciation will hurt exporters, but for how long? Soon, they will make price corrections on succeeding orders, just as importers did during the years of continued peso depreciation.—**Robert Bachman (via e-mail)**

* * *

Licensure exams administered by the government through the Professional Regulation Commission are just one of the means to know how well graduates of schools perform. But their results also serve as a guide for prospective college students in choosing which schools to enroll in. The Commission on Higher Education should publish the performance of graduates of different schools in all fields of study based on the PRC exams.—**Alexis Fillone, De La Salle University (via e-mail)**

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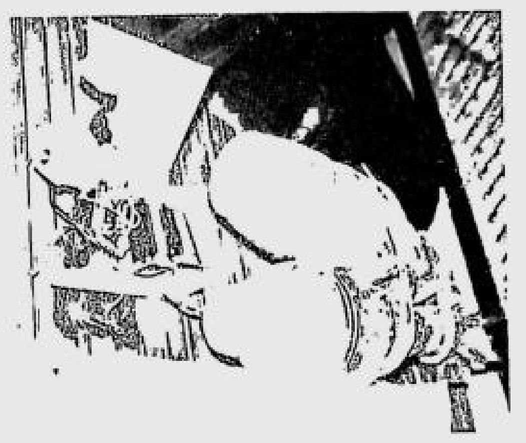
Bombings had trademark of Indon terror suspect



TWO unexploded 81mm mortars, batteries and a mobile phone (not in the picture) recovered 11 Oct. 2006 inside a backpack placed in front of the crowded Makilala town hall in Mindanao following a bomb attack that left six dead. DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

By Jim Gomez
Associated Press Writer

THREE HOMEMADE BOMBS THAT EXPLODED THIS WEEK IN Cotabato, including one that killed six people, were set off by mobile phones, a sign that officials believe points to Dulmatin, one of Asia's most wanted terror suspects.

A fourth unexploded bomb, made of two 81 mm mortar rounds attached to a Nokia mobile phone, was found Wednesday near a public plaza in Makilala town, site of the explosion that killed six people and wounded 29 the night before, police said.

When investigators examined the mobile phone, it had one missed call—an eerie indication of the attacker's failed effort to trigger a deadly explosion, a police official said Thursday on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

While an investigation has just begun, officials strongly believe it will eventually lead to Dulmatin and his group, the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiyah, which has been blamed for some of the region's worst terrorist strikes.

Police intelligence officials have said Dulmatin, from Indonesia, introduced bombs made with mobile phone-triggered mortar rounds with small electrical boards to Filipino guerrillas in secret training camps in the south.

Crude terror

Previously, Filipino Muslim rebels generally used grenades or other forms of hand-thrown explosives.

Although authorities have not seen Dulmatin—his black-and-white mug shot on the US most-wanted terrorist posters is several years old—investigators have followed the bloody trail of lethal bombings he allegedly helped stage from Indonesia to the Philippines.

His war also may have turned personal. Last week, troops captured his wife, Istiada Binti Oemar Sovie, and took custody of his two sons on southern Jolo Island, where Dulmatin, Patek and leaders of the Abu Sayyaf rebel group have been targeted by a US-backed offensive.

"We're looking into the angle that the Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah did the bombings to retaliate against the capture of Dulmatin's wife," AFP chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon told reporters Wednesday.

Authorities know little about Dulmatin. A US government Web site that offers a $10 million reward for his capture describes him as an electronics specialist who trained in al-Qaida camps in Afghanistan and is a senior Jemaah Islamiyah figure.

Finger-pointing

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol yesterday pointed an accusing finger at the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, accusing it of involvement in the bombings.

But rebel officials and a Catholic priest said the bomb attacks were intended to derail the already shaky peace negotiations and that a third party was behind it.

Piñol, who met with military and police officials in the province, said all indications point to the MILF's involvement in Tuesday night's bomb attack in Makilala, North Cotabato that left six people dead and wounded more than 30 others.

"The Jemaah Islamiyah's hands are visible here. The JI masterminded it, the MILF acted as the executioner," Piñol told the INQUIRER by phone.

The MILF has repeatedly denied involvement in the bombing run and even offered to help government agents identify and arrest the suspects.

The numbers on the cell phone that was used in the bombing, he said, was traced to Basit Usman, an alleged commander of the MILF's 105th base command.

"The mobile phone that was recovered in the unexploded bomb proved to be a rich trove of information that clearly identified the people who implemented the series of bombings in Central Mindanao Monday and Tuesday," Piñol said.

But MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said Piñol's accusation was "highly unfair."

"There is no political gain for the MILF in terrorism, besides being a crime to God," Iqbal said.

Criminal record

Iqbal told the INQUIRER that Usman has never been an MILF member.

"We know that he had been previously arrested for various crimes. He was jailed but was later released upon the military's intervention," he said.

"The MILF now cannot wash their hands and simply say they knew nothing of the bombing that killed and injured my people," Piñol said.

With reports from Edwin O. Fernandez, Jeoffrey Maitem and Nash B. Maulana, with reports from Allan A. Nawal and Eldic S. Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao

'When investigators examined the mobile phone, it had one missed call—an eerie indication of the attacker's failed effort to trigger a deadly explosion...'

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project as stated below

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time		Non-Refundable Fee
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
1 Lot Supply, Delivery and Installation of 2 Units Automatic Low Voltage Capacitor Banks, Rated 1200K VAR, 480V, 60Hz, 3-Phase in NEMA 1 Free Standing Vertical Panels, Powder Coated Finish, Inclusive of Applicable Labor and Materials	P2,400,000.00	October 26, 2006 2.00 PM	November 8, 2006 1.00 PM	P 1,200.00

The Bid Documents shall be available at the General Services Department starting October 13, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at GSD Conference Room, 25th Floor LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar St . Malate, Manila.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes placed in single outer envelope and sealed accordingly in the bid box located at the abovementioned address

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LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s)

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI–Oct. 13 & 20, 2006)

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City, 1308

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Contracting of Firms for Local Fund Management Services

1. The GSIS, through its Corporate Fund for CY 2007 intends to apply the sum of THIRTY TWO MILLION PESOS (Php 32,000,000.00) being Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Services for Local Fund Management, as follows:

Group A (For 3 Fund Managers – P2 billion mandate)	Php 24,000,000.00
Group B (For 4 Fund Managers – P500 million mandate) :	8,000,000.00

2. The GSIS invites duly licensed Fund Managers that have been in operation for at least ten (10) years to submit *Letter of Intent* (LOI) to apply for eligibility and to bid. Interested bidders are required to submit their LOIs on or before **October 20, 2006** at the *GSIS Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat*, Level 7 GSIS Headquarters Building, Financial Center, Pasay City

3. Bidding shall be: a) open and competitive, using the non-discretionary *pass/fail* criteria as specified in Part A of the *Implementing Rules and Regulations* of Republic Act No. 9184 (*Government Procurement Reform Act*); and b) limited to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act No. 5183 Whether a bidder is eligible or ineligible shall be determined through the process described in Section II of the bidding documents. Only the bids of those found eligible shall be opened. The bidder with the Highest Rated Bid (HRB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage, where it is determined whether a bidder satisfies both the eligibility and the technical requirements of the project. The contract shall be awarded to the bidder with the Highest Rated Responsive Bid (HRRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The GSIS shall evaluate the bids using the QUALITY-BASED Evaluation Procedure. The GSIS shall indicate the weights to be allocated for the Technical Proposals. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instruction to Bidders

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the *GSIS Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat* Level 7 GSIS Headquarters Building, Financial Center, Pasay City with telephone number 832-1894; and buy the *bidding documents* for **P3,000.00** in cash **from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., starting October 18, 2006**. The prospective bidder or his authorized representative shall personally receive the bidding documents.

5. The GSIS BAC will hold a pre-bid conference on **October 20, 2006, 9:00 am** at the PRS Lounge, Core C, Level 1, GSIS Headquarters Building, Financial Center, Pasay City.

6. The *eligibility requirements* together with the technical bids must be submitted on **November 7, 2006, from 10:00 to 10:30 am** at the PRS Lounge, Core C, Level 1, GSIS Headquarters Building, Financial Center, Pasay City. Late bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders or their representatives on **November 7, 2006, at 11:00 am.** All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the following forms:

Form of Bid Security	Amount	
	Group A	Group B
Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check	80,000.00	20,000.00
Surety Bond	200,000.00	50,000.00

7. The GSIS BAC encourages and prefers that the *eligibility requirements* be submitted **before** the submission of the technical bids. The procedure will give the GSIS BAC enough time to inform the concerned bidders about any deficiencies and for the bidders to correct such deficiencies before the deadline for the submission of bids.

8. The details on the delivery schedule are provided in the bidding documents under **Section VII – Terms of Reference**

9. The GSIS reserves the right. a) to accept or reject any bid; b) to annul the bidding process, and c) to reject all bids anytime before the contract is awarded, without incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders

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More graft cases filed vs legislator

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE CITY GOVERNMENT filed last Tuesday additional complaints for graft and fraud against Pampanga Rep. Reynaldo Aquino, on top of 14 complaints filed last month for falsification of public documents.

The submission of supplemental affidavits by Sonia Soto, city administrator, raised 24 offenses against Aquino, a former mayor here.

Soto's additional complaints hinged on at least four "highly questionable transactions" that were part of the 14 cases earlier filed against the legislator, she said in a statement here on Thursday.

The cases pertained to alleged violation of Article 213 of the Revised Penal Code that penalizes fraud against the public treasury; alleged violation of Section 65 of the Government Procurement Reform Act and Section 3 of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

According to Soto, Aquino, while mayor for three terms, "approved and entered into various contracts and agreements with several contractors without the required appropriation [of funds]."

This, she said, "disregarded the bidding process."

Aquino, she said, "influenced and pressured several city employees to approve the appropriations and release of funds."

He also "single-handedly signed a number of public forms and documents to make it appear that covered transactions went through the normal procedure," Soto said.

Aquino did not reply to text messages seeking his reactions to the new complaints. His mobile phone was off. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

SOLDIERS and relatives of two policemen slain by communist guerrillas light up candles at the grave marker in a village in Iloilo of the two law enforcers who were killed in an NPA ambush. ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Captured NPA head cooling heels in Baguio

By Anselmo Roque
Inquirer Central Luzon

SAN JOSE CITY—THE TOP LEADER OF THE New People's Army in Central Luzon was literally cooling his heels in Baguio City, the country's summer capital, on Monday night when Nueva Ecija policemen and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group agents arrested him.

Leopoldo Caluza, a native of Villa Marina here, did not resist when police arrested him in an apartment at Green Valley in Baguio.

His arrest confirmed reports by the military operating in northern Nueva Ecija that Caluza, who was reported being in the mountain range in San Jose City-Carranglan in Nueva Ecija several times, was hiding in other places because of the government's campaign against the NPA.

Caluza is the leader of the regional operational command of the NPA regional committee in Central Luzon. He was former head of the provincial military department and provisional operational command of the NPA provincial committee in Nueva Ecija.

He was also head of the Kilusang Larangang Gerilya in this province. He used the aliases "Ka Ambo," "Ka Warly," "Ka Bilog," "Ka Ino," and "Ka Mario."

Caluza has eight warrants of arrest: three for murder, one for rebellion, one for destructive arson, one for direct assault with murder, and two for robbery in band with homicide.

He was also linked to raids on police stations, burning of communication cell sites, extortion from companies and businessmen, and killings of government agents and informers.

Caluza was tagged by a rebel-returnee as the one who ordered the 2002 execution of Kathlyn Ramos, 19, a member of the League of Filipino Students at the Central Luzon State University in Muñoz City.

Ramos was reportedly executed because she was suspected to be a government agent. Her remains were recovered on Oct. 5 in Rizal town.

While Caluza was hiding in Baguio, NPA rebels in Nueva Ecija were fighting government forces in the hinterlands in the northern part of the province.

Lt. Col. Joselito Kakilala, commander of the Army's 48th Infantry Battalion, reported that his men clashed twice with NPA rebels in Carranglan town during the weekend. No one was reported hurt in both clashes.

Ifugao offers land for jatropha plants

BAGUIO CITY—THE CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE Region (CAR) has joined the jatropha bandwagon as a source of biofuel.

Dr. Ben Ladilad, regional director of the Department of Science and Technology-CAR (DOST-CAR), said the local government of Alfonso Lista in Ifugao has committed an initial 12,000 hectares of land for jatropha plantation, and up to 32,000 ha for expansion.

Ladilad said they have pledged to help the town in the processing of jatropha as biofuel when production reaches sufficient volumes needed for the conversion.

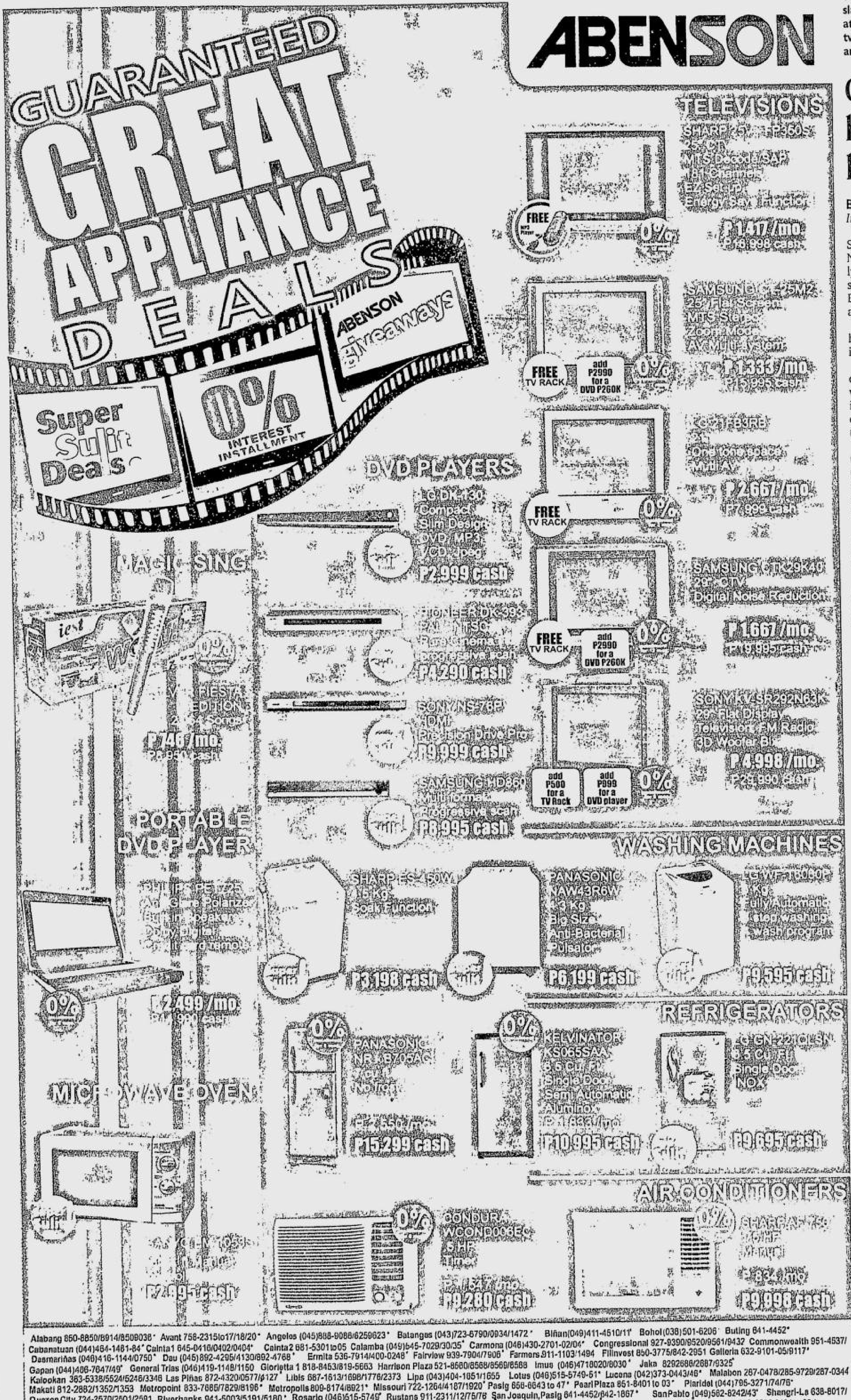
Jatropha is a fast growing tree shrubbery that thrives in poor quality soil. It is an indigenous plant and is known among rural folk as a medicinal plant. Its bark and leaves, when heated, are applied to cure rheumatism and muscle ache.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has identified jatropha, (also known as *tuba-tuba* or *tagumbao*) as a priority crop for the production of biofuel and to achieve the goal of her administration to achieve self-sufficiency in energy.

Jatropha seeds have yielded oil that can be used as an alternative source of fuel.

Crude jatropha oil can be used to fuel lamps and for soap making. The cake after oil extraction can also be used as a high grade organic fertilizer.

Ladilad said jatropha is commonly planted as hedge plants in gardens. *Donna Demetillo, Inquirer Northern*



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From humble beginnings PMAP has grown to an influential organization with a national and Asian reach. From being viewed as nothing more than muscle and sinew, **the Filipino worker has emerged as Philippine organizations' and the country's greatest asset.**

Pioneers Established PMAP's Value to Business and the Nation

The signing of the Magna Carta of Labor in 1953 by then President Ramon Magsayasay highlighted the need for personnel management professionals, but at that time personnel management handled odds and ends in the company. The founding father of PMAP , Perfecto Sison brought together professionals from various backgrounds to forge a new profession and on October 13, 1956- the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines was incorporated with 37 member companies. PMAP helped members to enhance their professional skills and took an active role in drafting the Labor Code, the Social Security Act and the Retirement Benefit Exemption Act.

PMAP Leaders Continue the Task of Building the Organization and Contributing to Nation building

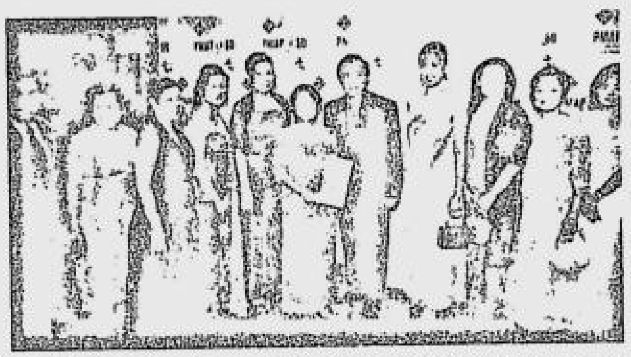
PMAP became the workhorse of Labor Secretary Blas Ople and was a regular consultant of SSS. It helped establish the NMYC and what is now ECOP. PMAP continued to grow, adding more member companies and chapters and building its organizational and infrastructure capabilities. The Employer of the Year Award, which has become the most prestigious HR award in the country, was launched in 1976. Business was also starting to recognize the importance of training and development of their human resource- the change from personnel management to human resources management , in fact signaled a significant shift in mindset. Human resource management practitioners were learning new perspectives,management tools and techniques.

PMAP at Fifty: From Success to Significance

On PMAP's golden anniversary, we see many HR executives playing a pivotal role in their organizations and many Philippine organizations-both subsidiaries of multinationals and Filipino-owned companies –paying more than lip service to the belief that people are the greatest asset of the corporation and that people development is an investment and not a cost of doing business. The Human resources function has come into its own, with HR leaders empowering people to join the great game of business and to build the community spirit to achieve company objectives.

As PMAP lives out its golden years, we renew our commitment to live by the spirit of volunteerism and deep love for country of its members and leaders in order to:

- Be an advocate and thought leaders in human resources management
- Lead in the task of developing the full human potential of the Filipino worker and talent
- Lead in human resources management education
- Put the Filipino talent at the center of national development plans and lend our voice and expertise to issues that impact on workforce competitiveness, employment and education
- Provide the more sustainable HR solution to ensure employee welfare, industrial peace and cooperation


A GIFT TO THE FILIPINO HR PRACTITIONER. PMAP presents Pres. Gloria Macapagal – Arroyo with their Anniversary book "People Management in the Philippines: Real Stories of Excellence"

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Orlando P. Peña
1970-1973

Rafael K. Hernaez
1974

Benildo G. Hernandez
1975-1976

Justino H. Cacanindin
1977 & 1979

Ismael G. Khan, Jr.
1978

Wenceslao L. Malabanan
1980-1981

Renato J. Fernandez
1982-1984

Luzmindo B. Fajardo
1985

Luis Ma. Ongsiapco
1986-1987

Sonny Coloma
1988

Ranulfo P. Payos
1989-1990

Rene Y. Soriano
1991

Carlito S. Villanueva
1992

Rosario S. Ventura
1993

Solita V. Delantar
1994

Edgardo R. Soriano
1995

Pilar P. Almira
1996

Lucila C. Tarriela
1997

Barbie L. Atienza
1998

Ernesto O. Cecilia
1999

Rene M. Gener
2000

Federico R. Marquez, Jr.
2001

Ernesto G. Espinosa
2002

Ramon S. Medina
2003

Oscar L. Contreras, Jr.
2004

Lina A. Aseneta
2005

Chavit files case of plunder vs 43 execs over Poro Pt. row

SINGSON carries with him a pile of documents in connection with a plunder case he filed against BCDA and PPIC officials over the Poro Point controversy.
RAFFY LERMA

By Norman Bordadora

ILOCOS SUR GOV. LUIS "CHAVIT" SINGSON yesterday filed a plunder case against 43 respondents, including Bases Conversion and Development Authority president Narciso Abaya, in connection with the alleged illegal and fraudulent transfer of the Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone to an allegedly unqualified firm Bulk Handlers Inc.

Singson filed the charges at the Office of the Ombudsman against the respondents, that also included Government Corporate Counsel Agnes Devanadera, former BCDA chair Rogelio Singson, and other past and present officials of the BCDA, BHI, John Hay Poro Point Development Corp., and Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC).

Singson alleged that the respondents unjustly enriched themselves at the expense of the government in the amount of at least P2.6 billion since Nov. 1, 1999, when the La Union port was transferred to the BHI despite its having a paid-up capital of just P250,000 and five employees.

"On Nov. 1, 1999, respondents arrogated upon themselves the power and authority to 'utilize, manage, operate, and develop the Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone' in San Fernando City, La Union for a period of 25 years," said Singson's lawyer Bonifacio Alentajan.

"This illegal and fraudulent conveyance and disposition of the assets, properties and rights of Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone by respondents were done without public bidding nor approved by the Office of the President as specifically required by existing laws," Alentajan said.

Brigido Dulay, legal counsel of PPIC, refused to comment on the case, saying it hasn't reached his office.

But he said he wasn't sure if a private group, like the BHI, could be sued for plunder.

Alentajan said Abaya and BCDA officials Rafael Julian Azanza, James Lorenzana, Ari-Ben Sebastian, Gerard Seno and Renato Valencia were included in the the complaint even though they were appointed to the BCDA long after the contract was signed between BCDA and BHI.

Also included in the charges were Alvin Capino, director of PPIC and Isaac Puno, a director of BCDA.

"They inherited and pursued the same felonious, unlawful and corrupt practices of their predecessors. They allowed the very serious crimes against the government and its duly constituted agencies," Alentajan said.

As for Rogelio Singson, Alentajan said he was the chair of the BCDA when the contract for the transfer of the port to BHI in 1999 was signed.

"Who were the past presidents of the BCDA? Only Singson signed," Alentajan said.

As for the government corporate counsel at the time the contract was entered into in 1999, Alentajan said then government corporate counsel Jun Valerio is already dead and may no longer be charged.

Alentajan said government corporate counsels before Devanadera never involved themselves with the Poro Point contract.

Alentajan said Devanadera was asked as early as January 2006 to declare the contract void.

"Until now, there is no decision. She even defended it in a congressional hearing," Alentajan said.

Singson said he was forced to file the complaint because of the seeming inaction of the government on the alleged anomalous contract for the port.

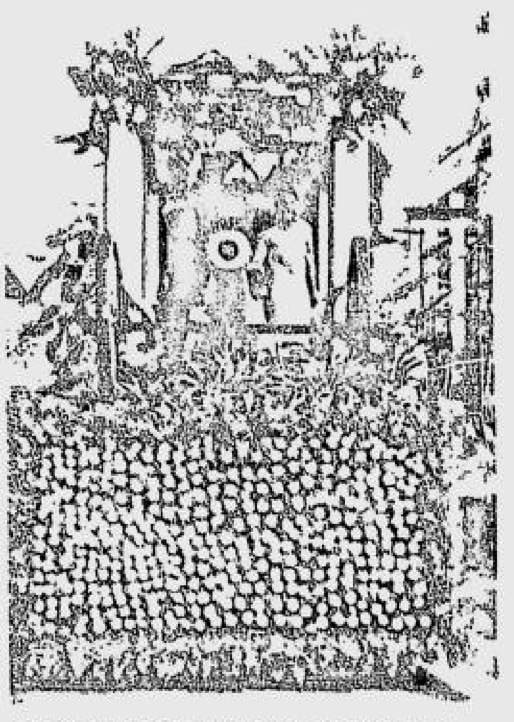
"It seems nothing is happening. This is why I filed," Singson said.

Abaya said he welcomed the filing of the case.

"I welcomed this so that we can settle once and for all the issues on the Poro Point (port contract) in the proper forum," Abaya said in a phone interview.

But he said he wondered why he was included in the charge when he came in long after the contract had been signed.

"I do not see the reason why I should be made a respondent when I came on board after the contract was signed," said Abaya.



A MINIATURE of Fort Pilar adorned with flowers is paraded in Zamboanga City during the celebration of the La Hermosa Festival.
JULIE ALIPALA/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Rains won't stop Zambo City feast

ZAMBOANGA CITY—HEAVY RAINS THAT triggered floods in many areas of the city, failed to dampen the spirit of Zamboangueños as they went on with the celebration of the 12-day La Hermosa Festival.

The event, also known as Fiesta Pilar, is being held since Oct. 1 in honor of the miraculous image of Our Lady of Pilar.

The festival features vinta race, street dancing, musical concerts and other crowd-drawers.

Ricardo San Juan, Western Mindanao Tourism director, told the INQUIRER that despite the floods that prompted the city government to declare a state of calamity in at least nine villages, foreign and local tourists have flocked here to join the festivities.

He said since September, hotels have reported high occupancy rates.

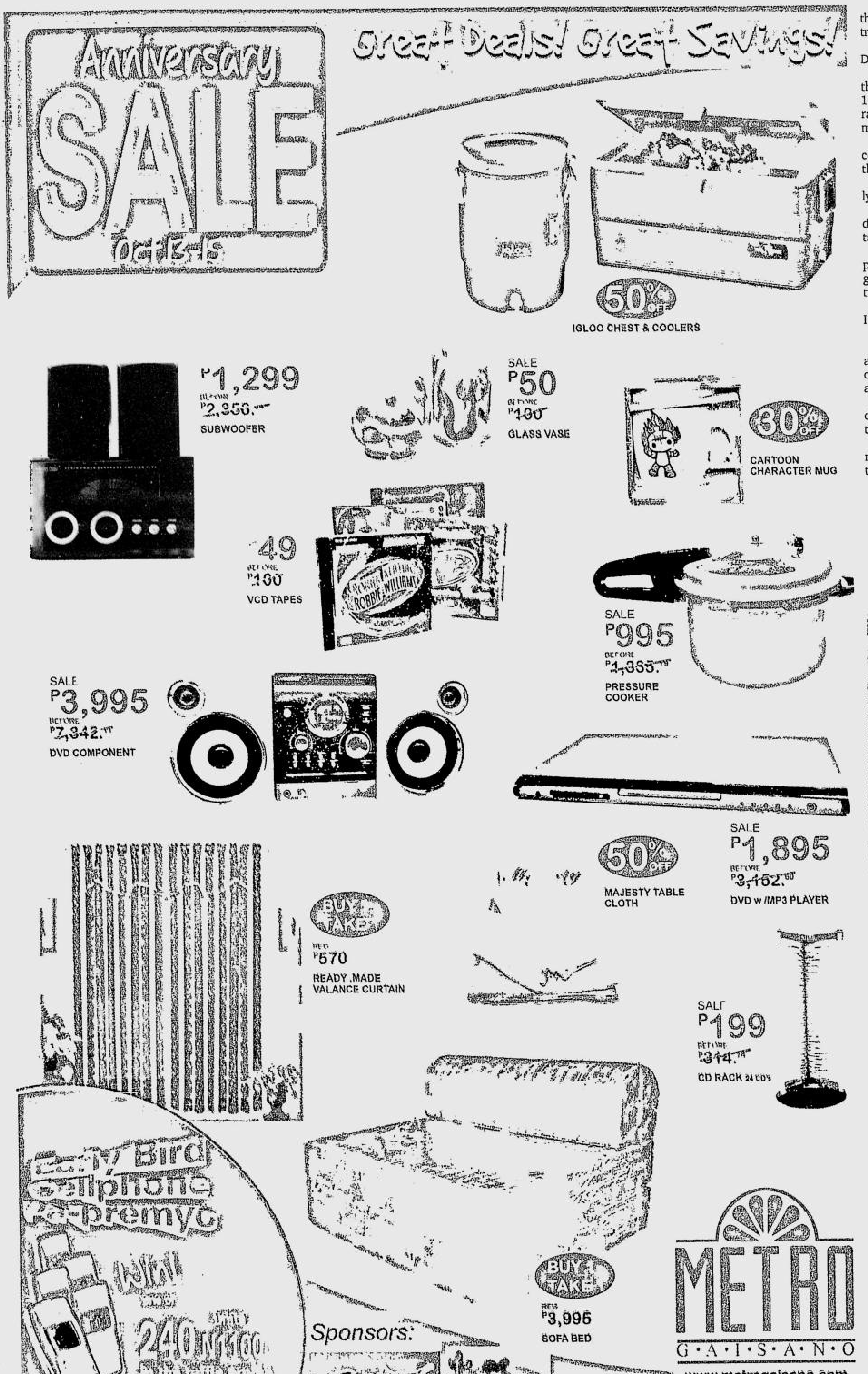
"We don't have the actual figures right now, but based on our monitoring, all hotels, inns, lodging houses and resorts are fully booked," San Juan said.

San Juan said Filipinos who are working abroad have also come home to pay homage to the Lady of Pilar.

Hotel officials confirmed the influx of visitors to the city during the past weeks.

Chito Ledesma, business manager of the Lantaka Hotel, said they had refused to accommodate those making last minute bookings because there was simply no room available to book them in.

"Our rooms are fully occupied until next month," he said. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*



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Sugar country hails passage of biofuels bill by Senate

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE PASSAGE of the biofuels bill by the Senate Wednesday was hailed by Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri and sugar leaders as an early Christmas gift for the Filipino people and for sugar-producing provinces like Negros Occidental.

The Senate voted unanimously to pass the biofuels bill that would require all liquid fuels for motors and engines sold in the Philippines to contain local components, according to bill sponsor, Sen. Mar Roxas.

He said the Senate version is worded to ensure that the sugarcane used to produce the ethanol that would be blended with gasoline would be from the Philippines to protect local producers.

It also ensures the supply of sugar for food is adequate, Roxas said in a phone interview Wednesday.

Biofuels bill

Zubiri, who authored the House version of the biofuels bill, in a separate telephone interview, said a bicameral conference committee would be convened to reconcile the provisions of both the House and Senate versions.

Zubiri said he expects the biofuels law to be enacted in November.

Legislators from the sugar bloc, like Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella and Rep. Jose Carlos Lacson (Neg. Occ., 3rd District), will join the House team in the bicameral conference committee, he said.

Zubiri said 12 ethanol plants were expected to rise in various parts of the country once the bill becomes a law.

Aside from the multimillion-peso bioethanol plant being built in San Carlos City in Negros Occidental, Zubiri said five other such plants were to be built on Negros Island while two were being planned for Cebu.

"The sugar producers will not only survive, they will flourish," he said.

Sugar Regulatory Administrator James Ledesma said the Senate's passage of the biofuels bill would provide stability to the sugar industry that is faced with fluctuating world market prices.

Bigger market

He said the biofuels bill would provide a bigger market for sugarcane because five ethanol plants were already expected to immediately rise in San Carlos City in Negros Occidental, Batangas, Pampanga, northern Luzon and Bukidnon once a biofuel law is implemented.

Manuel Lamata, president of the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines, said the passage of the biofuels bill would also draw in more foreign investors to develop ethanol plants.

"Negros will boom again," he predicted.

Bernard Trebol, a director of the Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations, said new agricultural areas would need to be opened, to provide more jobs, if the law is passed.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon, on the other hand, projected a stable sugar industry with the passage of a biofuel law.

Senate Bill 2226 provides that at least 5 percent of bioethanol would have to be blended with gasoline within two years of the law's effectivity.

Upon effectivity, the bill provides that 1 percent of bioethanol should be mixed with diesel.

Bulusan ash covers 18 Sorsogon villages

VOLATILE MOUNT BULUSAN volcano in Sorsogon spewed ash for a third day yesterday, covering what a mayor of one town said were at least 18 villages.

After five months of calm, Bulusan began blasting thick columns of ash into the air on Tuesday.

"Bulusan's alert level one remains in effect," the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Philvolcs) said in a statement.

Although still at the lowest alert level, Philvolcs said a 4-km danger zone was in place around the 1,565-meter volcano.

"Areas near the danger zone and especially near river channels should be considered risky because these areas are susceptible to potentially life-threatening mudflows," the institute said.

Volcanic activity

Scientists are closely monitoring Bulusan's volcanic activity but see no reason to raise the alert level, which ranges from 1 to 5.

Bulusan has erupted at least 15 times since 1886, most recently in 1995.

Bulusan Mayor Juan Guysayco said at least 18 villages were covered with ash and recalled hearing reports that the ash also reached the towns of Matnog, Sorsogon and Allen, Samar.

Albino Espino, action officer of the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council, said Phivolcs measured 4-5 mm thick ash in some of the villages.

Face masks were distributed to residents, some of them leftovers in June that were not used during Bulusan's ash explosions then, said Espino.

Dr. Cruzantina Lopo, municipal health officer, said a resident was sent to the hospital for inhaling ash. Two villagers were kept in a health center while 115 cases of diseases traced to the ash fall—asthma attacks, gastroenteritis, hypertension, conjunctivitis and respiratory infections—were listed.

Run out of medicines

Lopo said the town could run out of medicines if the number of cases goes up.

The mayor said town officials were ready to evacuate at least 15,145 people should Bulusan erupt.

Evacuation plans are also in place in Casiguran town, according to its mayor, Edwin Hamor.

But two likely evacuation centers, the Trece Martires Elementary School and Ponong Elementary School, lost their roofs when Typhoon Milenyo struck.

Hamor appealed for help from the national government to put roofs back to the schools. *AFP with a report from Niño Jesus Orbeta, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Group starts signature drive online for 'Nicole'

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Women activists assisting Nicole, the Filipina who charged four United States Marines with rape, have posted a petition on the Internet in a bid to rally more support for her.

The petition, titled "Justice for Nicole, Justice for Our Nation," began Friday and had gathered about 500 signatures as of Wednesday, according to Corazon Requiso, coordinator of the Task Force Subic Rape (TFSR) that launched the online campaign using the iPetitions as platform.

Requiso said the TFSR has tapped the Internet to broaden the reach of the signature campaign, and hopefully reach the international community.

Since helping Nicole in December 2005, the TFSR has maintained a website devoted for updates on the case. That site carries background, including the transcripts of the Visiting Forces Agreement and the anti-rape law.

The petition called for support for Nicole, "who, as rape survivor, is fighting not only for herself but for the dignity of all Filipinos, and for the sake of Filipino women and men who are at risk from various types of abuse that may arise from the VFA."

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DEPT. OF INJUSTICE KA,
INCOMPETENT PA!
-GAB F

MEMBERS of the Left militant women's group Gabriela hold a rally at the Department of Justice office in Manila to demand the conviction of four US Marines charged with raping Nicole. ERIK ARAZAS

The early signatories include American, Japanese and mostly Filipinos. In the box assigned for comments, some have written messages urging Nicole, 23, to remain courageous, Requiso said in a phone interview.

Several members of the TFSR, like Requiso, provided security to Nicole during court hearings. In the earlier days of the campaign, some served as dummies for Nicole to escape being hounded by the media.

The TFSR, a coalition of 17 organizations, said the rape, which allegedly took place in a moving van at the Subic Bay Freeport on Nov. 1, 2005, was a "landmark case."

"[It is] the first that has come to trial in our country against US servicemen, for its importance in challenging the implementation of the anti-rape law in the furtherance of women's rights," part of the petition read on www.ipetitions.com/petition/justicefornicole.

In it, the TFSR also expressed frustration over the "lack of sensitivity and resoluteness" of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez in defending Nicole, a native of Zamboanga City who was vacationing in Subic when she was allegedly raped.

"According to the TFSR, Gonzalez has "consistently made statements inimical to the case."

These statements, it said, pertained to his "refusal to issue a warrant of arrest, [plan to] downgrade the case of three US Marines, insinuat[ion] that Nicole could be merely imagining the prosecutors' 'incompetence' just as she may have imagined being raped," and his stubborn refusal to change the prosecutors in spite of the unethical and unprofessional conduct of the senior prosecutor." *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Cordillera losing scientists to multinational firms abroad

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE Cordillera is experiencing a shortage of chemists, physicists and engineers as many of the region's professional scientists have gone abroad to accept jobs in multinational companies, an official of the Department of Science and Technology here said.

Ben Ladilad, DOST regional director, said even science teachers are being sought abroad because of promises of higher salary and other benefits.

"We are losing the best and the experienced scientists and they are replaced by fresh graduates who still lack experience. However, we should not discount our professionals who choose to remain to serve the country. But they are the exception," Ladilad told reporters here on Wednesday.

He said multinational companies in Europe, the United States, China and Australia prefer those with expertise in chemical manufacturing, information technology, engineering and agriculture.

Invest in business

Ladilad said they were hoping that these scientists would return to the country "so they could share their experience and expertise and invest in business that could benefit our people in return."

He said the multinational companies' continuous piracy of Filipino chemists, physicists and engineers could be an "indication that Filipino scientists are globally competitive."

He said the DOST would conduct a comprehensive survey to get the actual number of scientists and science scholars leaving for jobs abroad.

New scholarship

He said the survey results would become a basis to design a new scholarship program and consider the demand for the services of local scientists.

"We are encouraging our scholars to serve the country but the government is sacrificing too much for our talented people because they choose to go abroad," Ladilad said.

Ladilad said the DOST has also observed that the number of enrollees for science and technology courses continue to drop through the years.

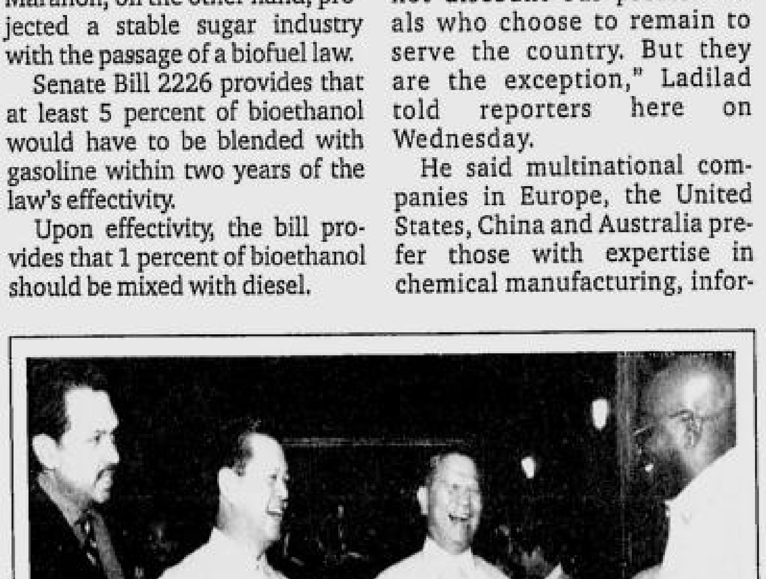
'Very difficult'

He said a common complaint they would hear from students is that science courses are "very difficult" so they avoid these.

Ladilad said the DOST is planning to increase the stipend for its scholars to attract more students to shift to science courses.

He said the government is allotting P15 million a year to fund the DOST's more than 2,500 scholars.

In the Cordillera, the DOST is supporting 100 scholars enrolled in state colleges and universities and private schools. The government, he said, spends P200,000 to P250,000 per scholar. *Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*



MINING CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Vice President Noli de Castro and Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes exchange pleasantries in Malacañang with delegates to the Indaba in the Philippines Mining Conference in Makati City recently. At left is Philip Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines. The conference discussed the revival of the mining industry in the Philippines.

S.O.S. SORSOGON

Appeals for help in cash or in kind to help rehabilitate schools, markets and churches in the province hardest hit by "Milenyo."

Anonymous donor: P1,000,000

To our appeal, an anonymous millionaire has given one million to this fund-raising!

To facilitate help of S.O.S. Sorsogon, we have sent P500,000 to Sorsogon City directly to Bank of the Philippine Islands branch in Sorsogon.

Yesterday, that money was used by Fr. Gerard Deveza and Councilor Dave Duran to start helping the barangays of Sorsogon.

Volunteers who want to join S.O.S. Sorsogon may get in touch with **Ella Duran-Nolasco at 646-9980 or Azucena Grajo-Uranza at 928-9844 or 373-0810 or Fr. Gerard Deveza at 0917-5382023 or 0918-9008925.**

Gerry Arnedo	P4,000	Evelyn Bariso	1,500
Gonzalo Beñag	500	Orlando Mendiola	5,000
Irma Cascante	1,500	Maria Clara Villanueva	3,000
Lydia Gregorio	7,000	Ramon Madrid	500
Thelma Lee Mendoza	10,000	Goring Santos	500
Lourdes Paela	500	Johnny Hubilla	2,000
Luis Uranza	10,000	Anonymous	1,000,000
Lilian Belen	5,000	**Total**	P1,051,000

Checks have been deposited at Bank of the Philippine Islands
(Account # 0011168701)

Watch this space Monday, Wednesday and Friday for reports on S.O.S. Sorsogon

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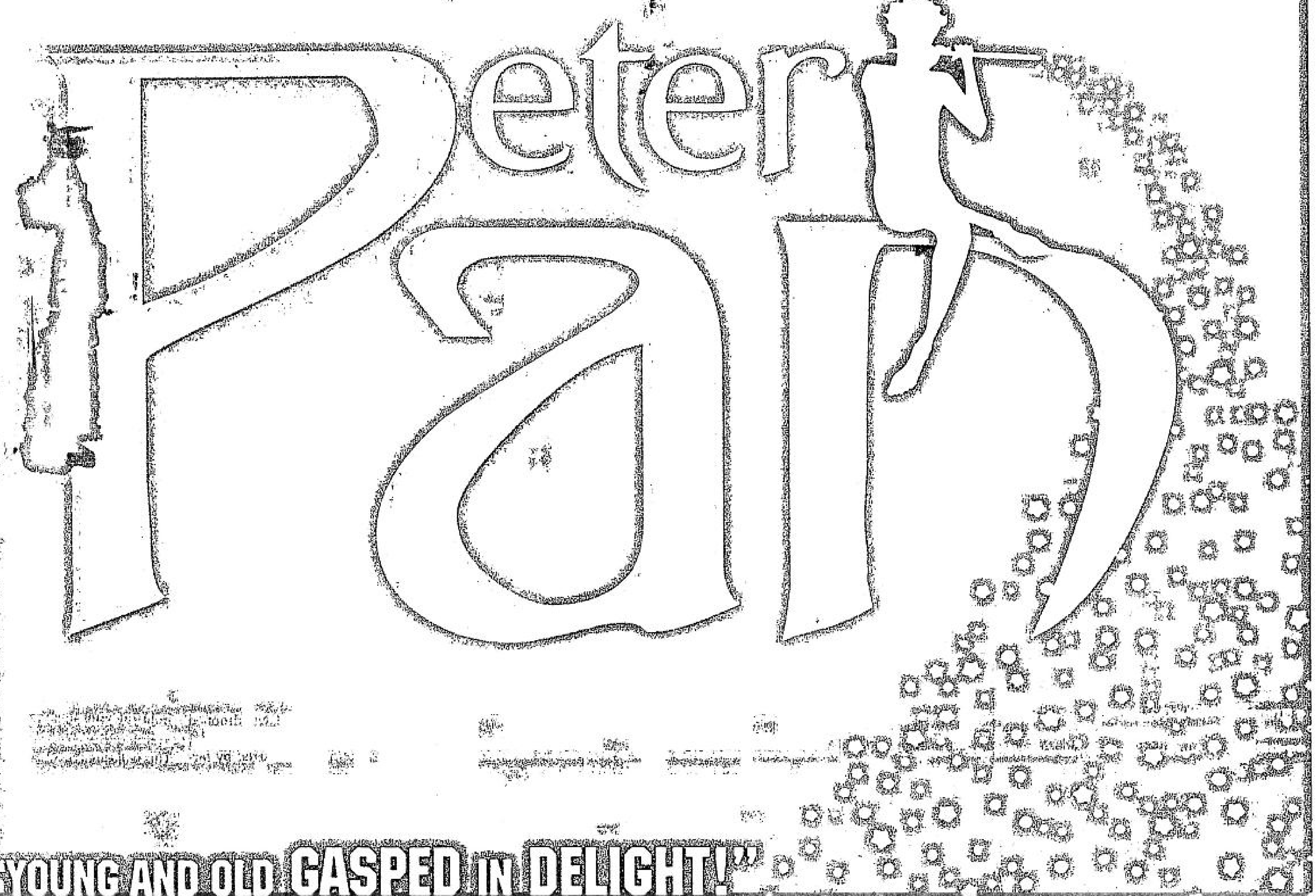

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Makati set to fight Palace plan to get Binay

From page A1

In front of the councilors' offices, supporters sat waiting, wearing small pink tags on their shirts. None of them could say, however, what the decals meant. Binay's staff said the mayor was going about his schedule, attending a forum outside the building in the morning and returning for meetings in the afternoon.

His spokesperson Lito Anzures downplayed the apparent state of siege. "These are just new security arrangements. You all know that there are real threats to the mayor's life," he said.

But Anzures acknowledged that some supporters came to City Hall after hearing news of the mayor's possible suspension.

Submitted to Palace

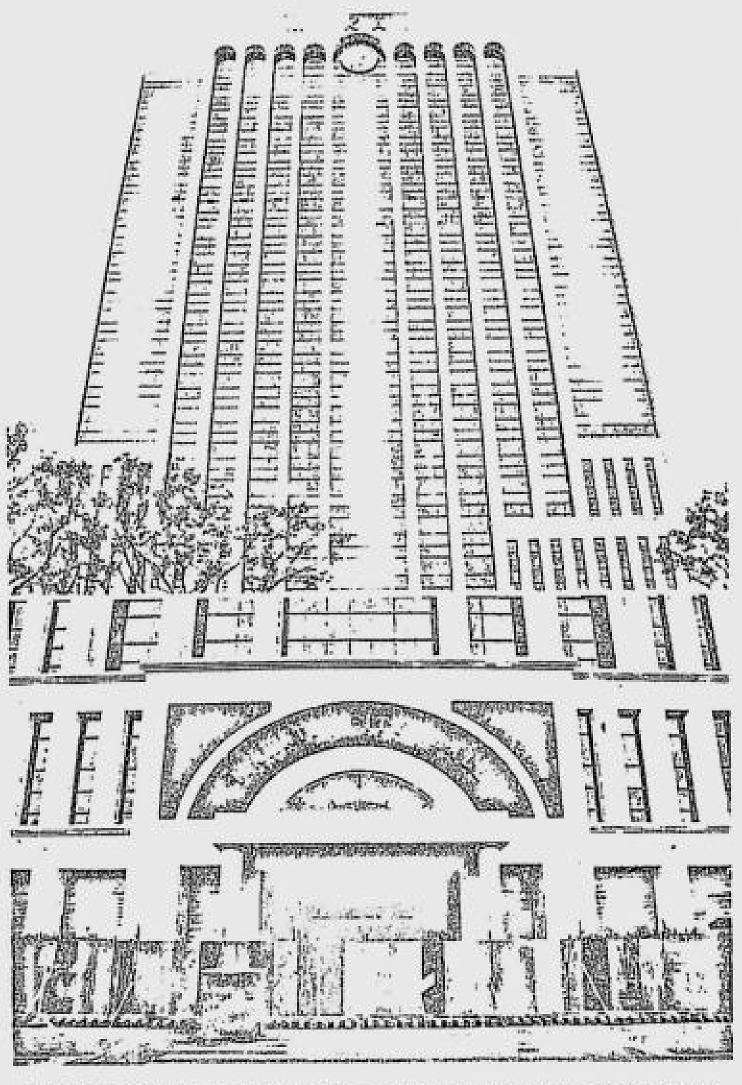
Binay's camp said it had received "reliable information" that an administrative case filed against him, Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado and 16 city councilors by his political rival Roberto Brillante had been submitted to Malacañang for evaluation by the Department of Interior and Local Government.

"If the DILG recommends my suspension and Malacañang issues the order, it is clear that the action is pure political harassment. The complaint over alleged ghost employees at the Makati City Hall should be dismissed outright because it was based on dishonest and deceptive information," said Binay in a statement.

"Despite the flawed complaint, DILG is expected to recommend to Malacañang the suspension of [Binay], [Mercado] and all councilors. The Malacañang suspension order might be issued on the same day," said a statement from City Hall, quoting an unnamed informant.

"We don't have specifics regarding the suspension ... But we're not losing sleep over this. If it comes, then it will come. The mayor said he will fight it, but within all legal means available," Anzures said.

INQUIRER PHOTO



UNDER SIEGE: Makati City Hall employees are circling the wagons around their boss. They were at work but not in uniform. A security officer said they were on high alert. None of the seven elevators went up all the way to the 21st floor, the mayor's office. REM ZAMORA

Rushed before pre-poll ban

Brillante's complaint, which alleged the existence of ghost employees on the Makati City government's payroll, was filed in August with the DILG, then forwarded to the Office of the President, which has jurisdiction over administrative cases against officials of highly urbanized cities.

Binay believed the case was being rushed so that he and his co-respondents would be suspended before Oct. 16, when the 90-day pre-election ban on administrative suspensions begins, as provided for in the Local Government Code.

City Hall said the ban would start Monday, or 90 days before the election period starts on Jan. 14, 2007.

Binay's camp expects the DILG to wrap up its investigation quickly and recommend to Malacañang the suspension of city officials. As the mayor and his men are in the opposition, a swift approval by the Office of the President is expected.

Rallies vs GMA

Binay has said that the purported "ghost employees" in Brillante's complaint are "warm bodies" actually working for the city government.

Binay has also denied any irregularity in the purchase of office furniture worth P231 million from 1999 to 2001 for the new City Hall building, which was the basis for Brillante's separate graft complaint recently elevated by the Ombudsman to the Sandiganbayan.

As president of the United Opposition, Binay had led rallies calling for Ms Arroyo's ouster last year over charges she rigged the 2004 presidential election. He has also opposed the Malacañang-endorsed amendment of the 1987 Constitution to pave the way for a parliamentary system of government.

Turk wins Nobel Prize for Literature

From page A1

"In fact, it was a long-running expectation of the Turkish public to see a Turkish writer found worthy of the Nobel Literature Prize," it added.

The official congratulations came despite bad blood between the establishment and the 54-year-old Pamuk, who has in the past challenged official policies and, in 1998, rejected the Turkish state's accolade of "State Artist."

Asked whether the government would wholeheartedly embrace Pamuk's success, Isen said: "I am concerned only with Pamuk as a novelist. His other actions are not of interest to me. I believe he is a good novelist and I believe he was awarded the Nobel for his novels."

Deserving

Ahmet Insel, a prominent academic and an editor at Iletisim, Pamuk's Turkish publishers, said the author fully deserved the prize for his literary skills.

"We are very happy. Pamuk is an important representative of the modern novel in the world," Insel told NTV. "We believe he fully deserves it."

The timing of the award was ironic.

Just hours before the Swedish Academy announced the winner of the Literature Prize, the French lower house of parliament approved a bill making it a punishable offense to deny that the massacre of Armenians during World War I under the Ottoman Turks constituted genocide.

Challenged massacres

Pamuk himself was put on trial earlier this year for controversial remarks challenging the official line on the Armenian massacres, which Turkey vehemently denies was genocide.

The case, in which he risked up to three years in jail, was dropped on a technicality in January after only one hearing marred by far-right demonstrators who attacked and booed the author.

The trial was preceded by death threats and a provincial official ordered the destruction of Pamuk's books—a move the government immediately cancelled, wary of undermining its democratic credentials in European Union eyes.

Calculated move

Some opponents even alleged that Pamuk's rows with the establishment were a calculated move to bolster his international fame and lay his hands on the Nobel prize.

But Insel rejected the charges.

"If we take a look at the long history of the Nobel Literature Prize, we see that the authors who won the award have made important political statements on the future of their countries and the world," he said.

"Pamuk won the award as a novelist. This is an honor for Turkey and Turkish literature," he said.

Metin Celal, chair of the Turkish Publishers' Union, said Pamuk's success would make Turkish literature more popular around the world.

"This is a historic day," he told CNN-Turk television.

Buket Uzuner, a popular Turkish author, agreed.

"I am proud that one of my contemporaries has won the award," she said. "It is ironic that Pamuk received the award the same day as the vote in the French National Assembly.

Long-term perspective

"But the core issue, of course, is that he is a good novelist."

Zulfu Livaneli—a novelist, composer, singer, member of parliament and friend of Pamuk—said the award would firmly put Turkish literature on the world map.

"It is very happy news that Turkish literature has received a Nobel Prize," he said. "We should not evaluate this in the current political atmosphere but take a look at the long-term perspective. This will show that there is such a thing as Turkish Literature," he said. *AFP*

Royal Australian Navy brings fun to cancer-stricken kids

From page A1

three months after she was diagnosed with bone cancer.

Clarenze was among the more than 10 cancer-stricken patients that some 20 young officers of the Australian Navy, with the help of the CWFI, treated to fun and games at a mall in Las Piñas City. They were given loot bags loaded with toys, candies and coloring books.

The officers arrived in Metro Manila last week for a joint maritime training activity with the Philippine Navy and a little "rest and relaxation." They left yesterday.

In an interview, Lt. Angela Andrews said that doing charity work was also the Navy's way of having fun and improving relationships with neighboring countries.

"It's good to be here with the kids. It makes me realize that there's always more you can do [for others]. I guess, it makes all of us really appreciate what we have," Andrews said.

Able Seaman Troy Dorosz, 23, said he had participated in countless outreach activities but few of them involved children with cancer.

"It feels good to see them smile. You don't see them enough in this world anymore," said Dorosz, who entertained the children with his juggling and balloon-twisting acts.

Birthday party

For Retzel Monderin, the Australian Navy officers' gesture was sort of an advanced birthday party for her daughter Leide, who will be turning 2 years old next month.

"I am very thankful that some people take their time to make our sick children happy and feel good about life," she said.

Except for her bald head and a gauze on her left eye, Leide looked every inch like a healthy girl ready to have fun. She munched excitedly on her spaghetti and hamburger, and danced to the hip-hop songs played.

Leide was diagnosed with retinoblastoma (cancer of the retina of the eye) early this year. She is now on her second of eight chemotherapy cycles. However, recent tests showed that the cancer has spread to her right eye.

"We are really praying so hard that she will get through this without losing her only eye," Monderin said.

Welcome change

On the other hand, Consuelo could not have been happier for her daughter, Clarenze.

She said the party was a welcome change for her daughter, who has grown weary with nowhere else to go but the hospital and back to a halfway house for cancer patients in Manila.

When the CWFI would take the children out for a concert or a party every now and then, Clarenze would be too sick to join the other patients, she said.

"Ever since she got cancer, she has lost self-confidence, said Consuelo. "She did not want to see her friends back home because she lost her leg."

Missing dancing

Because of Clarenze's illness, both mother and daughter rarely go home to Taytay, Rizal. Consuelo said that staying at their house in a squatters' area would only worsen her child's condition.

At one point during the party—especially when two mascots and some of the children broke into a dance—Consuelo would blink back tears, trying to shake off the sadness that has lingered since Clarenze got sick.

She said it hurt her every time her daughter would see people dancing on stage. Clarenze loved dancing and had even been chosen as a dancing coach to children in her barangay.

"I know she misses it although she doesn't tell me. I can tell just by looking at her," Consuelo lamented.

But Clarenze said having her leg amputated was her choice—the most difficult decision she had made so far. But losing a limb meant more years with her family, she said.

"If I can't dance, then I could always sing," she said, speaking like a true cancer warrior.

She also said she was trying her best to get better so she could go home and give all her toys, including the gift pack she received from the Navy officers, to her younger brother as a "*pasalubong*."

QUALITY TIME for Australian Navy officer Elizabeth Saunders is being with cancer patient Leide Rizel Monderin, 2, and Sonny Datoon, 3 during the Navy's outreach program for kids with cancer at the Story Land SM Southmall in Las Piñas. ERIK ARAZAS

US students turn to e-tutors in Asia for help with homework

From page A1

growing army of teachers being recruited across Asia to dispense their knowledge online to US kids.

American students communicate with their Asian tutors by using voice-over-Internet systems and a white board, which allows the two parties to share the same computer screen.

At TutorVista, a Bangalore-based company that launched US services last November, American customers pay $100 a month for unlimited hours of e-tutoring on a variety of subjects, ranging from physics to history.

The price represents a fraction of the $40-100 an hour that American parents typically have to pay for face-to-face tutoring sessions or the average $40 charged by US-based online tutors.

"We see TutorVista as a business to make education affordable to the masses," Krishnan Ganesh, the company's founder and chairman, told AFP in a telephone interview.

Big anomaly

Ganesh, 44, who has a background in engineering and management, said the majority of the 170 teachers his company employs were based in India, while a few were in the Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong. They are all college educated, and many are retired teachers.

"It's a big anomaly that the United States produces the maximum number of Nobel laureates . . . and yet the education system is in crisis at the school level," Ganesh said.

He said that 1,900 Americans, the youngest being 6 years old, had enrolled in TutorVista, with most seeking help in math and English, followed by science.

The company recently also began offering its services in Britain and plans to expand in India, China and Australia.

All tutors undergo extensive training programs that cover the US school curriculum and teaching methodology as well as slang words and US jargon, according to Ganesh.

"It's not that US schools are not good or that the teachers are not good," Ganesh said, in commenting about his growing business. "It's just that the students are not getting personalized attention, they are not getting one-on-one time."

Affordable way

Brown Varghese, a business analyst with LearnMatics, another e-tutoring service provider that recently began operating in the United States, said online tutoring offered students an affordable way to have an edge that could lead to better grades and help them get into college.

"It's supplemental education," said Varghese, whose company is based in Pennsylvania but employs tutors in India.

Prisa Zachariah, who is taking math and English classes from LearnMatics to help her with standardized college entrance exams, said she found the three hours of tutoring a week convenient and practical.

"It's really very helpful," said the 16-year-old high school student from Pennsylvania. "It's one-on-one and the tutors make sure you really understand."

Gaurav Chenji, another 16-year-old high school student from Michigan, enrolled with TutorVista for help with his math, English and physics homework. He said his grades had improved since he began taking about eight hours of tutoring a week in September.

"I was having a little trouble with English grammar and they worked on that," he said. "My grades went from A to A plus."

Growing industry

Ganesh believes e-tutoring is a multibillion-dollar industry just waiting to be tapped and he plans to launch online tutoring for Spanish and Chinese in the near future.

"We ultimately see ourselves as part of a family's monthly budget," he said.

"You spend $40 a month on cable, you spend on your monthly water and electricity bill and tutoring should be one more item in your monthly budget." *AFP*

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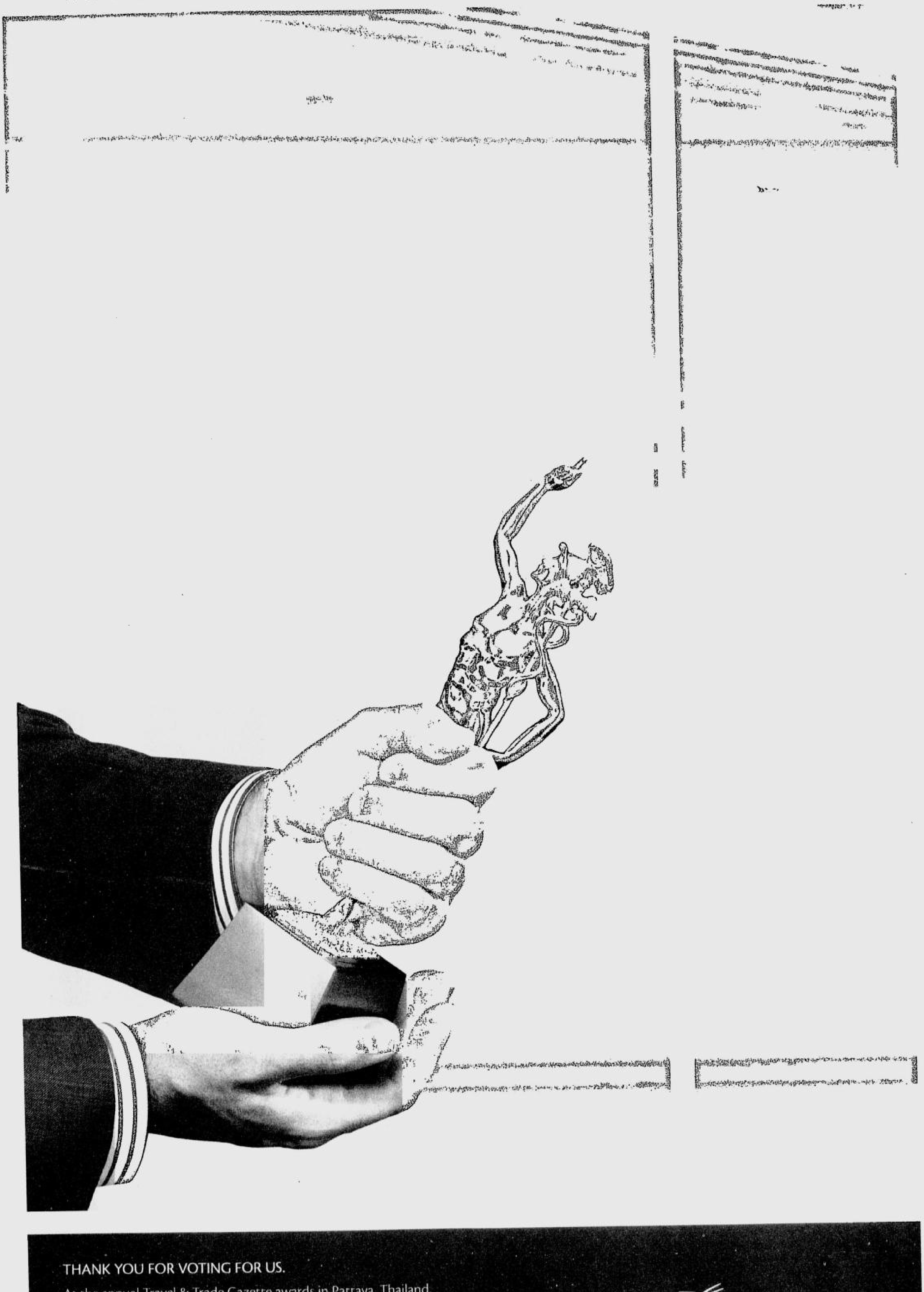

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At the annual Travel & Trade Gazette awards in Pattaya, Thailand, Qatar Airways were awarded best Middle East/African carrier 2006. This prestigious award was judged by travel industry specialists in the Asia Pacific region, so if you're not flying Qatar Airways, you're not flying the best airline in the Middle East and Africa.

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WHERE TO GO?
This family will have to start looking for a new home after soldiers began dismantling houses yesterday at Sitio Tago-Tago, Western Bicutan in Taguig City *(See story on A26)*.
REM ZAMORA

Four senators, staff charged with robbery

Exec claims office 'sacked'

By Tarra V. Quismundo

AN EXECUTIVE OF A GOVERNMENT-sequestered company filed yesterday robbery charges against four senators, their staff and five other individuals.

Manuel Andal, director and treasurer of the Philcomsat Holdings Corporation (PHC) that was the subject of a Senate investigation, sued Senate President Manuel Villar and Senators Mar Roxas, Richard Gordon and Juan Ponce Enrile. The case stemmed from the alleged ransacking of Andal's Makati office at around 6:20 p.m. on Sept. 14.

Andal alleged the senators conspired with several others to steal cash, documents, office equipment and other personal belongings from the PHC office.

Andal was one of PHC executives ordered arrested by the Senate in September for failure to attend its inquiry into alleged anomalous disbursement of funds by government-sequestered corporations.

The complaint, filed with the City Prosecutor's Office of Makati, also named Philcomsat stockholders Erlinda Ilusorio Bildner, Marietta Ilusorio, Kelly Ilusorio Raab, Raul and Rossan Baria as respondents.

Also included in the charge "robbery by a band" were Rosario Chapman, legislative secretary of the Senate committee on government corporations and public enterprises; Senate sergeant at arms Jose Balajadia and unidentified members of his staff.

"The respondents, confederating and conspiring with each other, mutually aiding one another, with force upon things, and with more than three of them being armed, unlawfully entered my office and other offices inside the premises of PHC, destroying the locks and breaking the doors of the same and proceeded to unlawfully take personal property belonging to me and or within my legal custody, with intent to gain," said Andal in his affidavit.

Allegedly taken from the PHC office at the Pacific Star Building were P10,000 in cash, bank records, canceled checks, ledgers, journals, vouchers, Bureau of Internal Revenue and expenses records, and office equipment like a laptop, three telephone headsets and three audio compact discs, and personal effects of the complainant.

Navotas a city by yearend?

By Nancy C. Carvajal

NAVOTAS MAYOR TOBY TIANGCO EXpressed confidence yesterday his town would become a chartered city before the end of the year.

Tiangco expressed this view after the Senate passed yesterday on third reading the petition for the conversion of the town of Navotas into a city. The mayor said that except for some differences in the versions of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the bill had the approval of majority of senators.

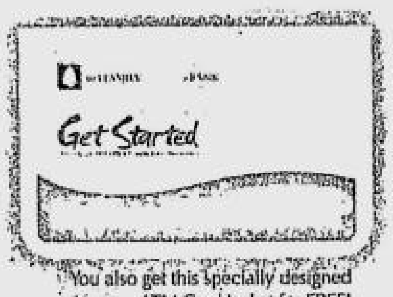
He said the two versions differed only on whether or not Navotas would have its own congressman. The Senate version, the mayor said, provided for a lone representative for Navotas, while the original bill authored by Malabon and Navotas Rep. Ricky Sandoval favored the present setup.

Tiangco said they had complied with all requirements and did not see any hindrance to the bill's adoption. "We are hopeful Navotas can become a city before Christmas," the mayor said.

Upon approval by Congress, the bill making Navotas a city must be signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo, then presented for approval by residents through a plebiscite.

Tiangco said basic services are expected to improve when Navotas becomes a city because its internal revenue allotment would increase. The local government's income was also likely to rise, he added.

If Navotas becomes a city, only two of Metro Manila's 13 local governments will remain municipalities — San Juan and Pateros



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See flyers for details.

Ad firm seeks TRO on dismantled billboard

By DJ Yap

AN ADVERTISING FIRM IS SEEKing a temporary restraining order to stop the Department of Public Works and Highways from dismantling one of its billboards.

In a motion filed before a Quezon City court, DDBS Advertising Unlimited also asked for a preliminary injunction against the dismantling of its 80x60-foot billboard beside the GMA-Kamuning Station of the Metro Rail Transit.

Named respondents were DPWH Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane and Reynaldo Tagudando and Ramon Devanadera of the DWPH Quezon City engineering district.

The billboard was supposed to show an ad for a soft drink company and was scheduled to be put up on Oct. 1.

The firm filed their petition in Branch 83 of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on Tuesday.

It also demanded to be paid P2.1 million in lawyer's fees, actual damages, and loss of business opportunities.

DDBS said the DPWH violated the company's rights to property and the nonimpairment clause when the agency started dismantling the structure on Oct. 9, following the crackdown on "killer billboards" at the height of Typhoon "Milenyo."

According to DDBS, none of its three billboards incurred any damage from the typhoon, nor did any of the ads cause injury to anyone.

The company had leased the property along East Avenue where the billboard has been standing from the Social Security System building along East Avenue since 2002.

DDBS said it had secured permits from the city planning and development office, office of the city engineer and Barangay Pinyahan. The company said it had also paid other fees to the city treasurer.

Although DDBS met all the requirements, the DPWH pushed through with the dismantling of the billboard, purportedly on the ground that the billboard was government property, it added.

DAY'S DONE Fishermen cross Manila Bay using a bamboo bridge to a fishing village along the Coastal Road in Parañaque City. Residents gather clams and shells to sell to markets nearby.

EDWIN BACASMAS

'Libingan' expansion plans leave 300 Taguig residents homeless

By Jocelyn R. Uy

TENSION GRIPPED RESIDENTS OF Sitio Tago-Tago in Western Bicutan, Taguig City when about 100 soldiers arrived Thursday night to enforce a demolition order from the Department of National Defense.

The cramped community of some 300 residents occupied land to be used for the expansion of the Libingan ng mga Bayani National Shrines inside the headquarters of the Philippine Army in Fort Bonifacio.

The soldiers, members of Task Force Bantay, fired several warning shots after unidentified persons fired and hurled rocks at them, said Col. Dante Fernandez, head of the demolition team. No one was reported hurt in the incident, he said.

At least 12 more Molotov cocktail bombs were recovered after the area was cleared.

"There was really an intention to disrupt violently the demolition, just like what happened in Sitio Masagana," said Fernandez. "We did not want that to happen here so we preempted that."

At least nine people were hurt in August when the task force attempted to tear down more than 100 houses in Sitio Masagana, one of four neighborhoods occupying portions of the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Peewee Vasquez, area manager of the Fort Bonifacio Satellite Government Center, said residents of Sitio Masigasig and Katipunan Village would soon be asked to leave their houses in view of the forthcoming development of the disputed 40-hectare government property. "The land needs to be developed because there are a lot of veterans and active military personnel who are dying," Fernandez said.

Rodante Monares, a Sitio Tago-Tago resident for 20 years, cried as he watched the rubble of what used to be his home. "We are like rats. We have no shelter," Monares told the INQUIRER.

Residents insisted their community was not part of the Libingan ng mga Bayani. But Fernandez said Proclamation 208 dated May 1967 declared Sitio Tago-Tago as part of the cemetery.

With Alcuin Papa

NBP guards replaced for allowing easy entry to visitors

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ALL JAILGUARDS AT THE MAXIMUM security compound of the New Bilibid Prisons have been replaced following reports that they demanded "gifts" from visitors.

NBP Director Vicente Vinarao said he received reports 15 guards asked visitors to buy things ranging from cell phone and SIM (subscriber's identification module) cards to candies and biscuits for a hassle-free entry.

"Visitors said they were forced to buy (the things) so they would not be searched every time they visited their relatives," Vinarao told the INQUIRER over the phone yesterday.

The NBP head said replacing jail guards every three months was part of stricter measures he implemented two weeks ago to prevent visitors from smuggling contrabands and illegal drugs.

Meanwhile, charges of violation of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 were filed yesterday against former Calauan Mayor Antonio Sanchez in the city prosecutor's office yesterday.

Sanchez was found by guard Ronaldo Palmiano to be in possession of a sachet of methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu) and marijuana, an improvised tooter, two strips of aluminum foil and two lighters.

Sanchez said they were "surrendered items" to be handed over to the Bureau of Corrections.

The former mayor was convicted in 1995 for the rape-slay of Eileen Sarmenta and the killing of Allan Gomez, both University of the Philippines Los Baños students, in June 1993.

Estrada wants biopic shown in Plaza Miranda

By Tina G. Santos

DEPOSED PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA petitioned the court yesterday to compel Manila Mayor Lito Atienza to allow his biopic to be shown in Plaza Miranda, a designated "freedom park."

Former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, one of Estrada's legal counsels, filed the petition for mandamus before the Manila Regional Trial Court.

Rodriguez said they were asking the court to direct Atienza to reverse his order banning the showing of "Ang Mabuhay Para sa Masa." The lawyer claimed the order was a grave abuse of authority and violation of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

Atienza twice denied the request of Estrada's Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino and Publikasia, producer of Estrada's film biography, for the showing of the controversial film and the holding of a forum.

The film got an X rating from the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

"The freedom park is beyond the reach of the MTRCB," Rodriguez said. He added that Atienza's action ran counter to the wisdom behind the creation of freedom parks by Batas Pambansa 880 as venues for free expression and political dissent.

"The reason behind the X rating which banned Estrada's biography was political in nature. This validates our position that the newsreel should be allowed a public exhibition at the freedom park," he said. "Films shown in freedom parks should also be exempt from MTRCB review."

Rodriguez said earlier their move would be a test case for the constitutional guarantee for free expression, particularly in the light of the Supreme Court's recent decision upholding the right of demonstrators to air their issues in designated freedom parks, even without the mayor's approval.

Speaking for Atienza, Manila city legal officer Melchor Monsod said the city government was merely implementing the law when it did not grant a permit for the showing of Estrada's controversial documentary.

Monsod said it was not Atienza who rejected the request. The MTRCB first issued a resolution regarding the film and the mayor was merely complying with the MTRCB decision. "This is not a question of deprivation of anybody's rights and suppression of freedom of speech and expression," he said.

As to the petition of Erap's camp, Monsod said there was a pending appeal with the Office of the President for a reconsideration of the MTRCB rating.

Monsod said the pending appeal would bar regular courts from entertaining any petition "since it violates the principle of exhaustion of administrative remedy and rule on forum shopping."

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METROBRIEFS

Mothers' lament

WORRIED parents have started bringing home their newly born babies from the Rizal Medical Center (RMC) in Pasig City following a report the other day that seven babies born there last week allegedly died of infection. Health officials closed down the hospital's delivery room temporarily for decontamination procedures. Winston Go, RMC director, has apologized to the parents of the victims, but maintained that his staff had been doing their job in protecting their patients. Hospital records said that out of the 28 babies born at the hospital on Oct. 4, seven died because of neo-natal sepsis or an infection in the blood. "I just want justice not only for my daughter but also for the children of the other mothers," said Janice de la Cruz of Mandaluyong City, who lost her first child Allisone that day. Dela Cruz said she had met other mothers and their babies with the same symptoms in the hospital. Go said the hospital was in an "abnormal condition" the day the mothers gave birth because Typhoon "Milenyo" had knocked down power lines and water connections. He said it was possible the delivery room was not cleaned immediately, but added the infants could have been infected outside the hospital when they were brought home.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Ellinwood turns 99

THE UCCP-ELLINWOOD Malate Church marks its 99th founding anniversary on Oct. 15 with the theme "Dedicating to God an Empowered Church." The highlight of the event is the Divine Thanksgiving Worship Service at 9:30 a.m, with preachers Elder Angel Aguilar Sr. and youth leader Mikas Inocencio. Other activities in the monthlong celebration include an essay writing contest, a congregational spiritual retreat, the dedication of the Uytengsu Mission Hall for the church's Street Dwellers Ministry and a musical acoustic night and fireworks display on Oct. 14. Ellinwood Malate Church is at 1660 Dr. A. Vasquez St., Malate, Manila. For inquiries, call 523-2884 or 523-6564.

Help Aika

AIKA Retrita, a 12-year-old student has been diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas and is currently confined at the Surgical-Pediatric Ward of the Philippine General Hospital. Aika's family is appealing to kind-hearted readers and generous souls to help them with the staggering costs of medical treatment and medicines. For those who would like to help, Aika can be contacted through her mother, Margie Retrita, at 09202220157. You can also get in touch with Dr. Renz Grageda at 418-6304/440-4809/09106736983. The Retritas are also asking everyone to say a little prayer for Aika's fast recovery.

DID YOU KNOW

METRO Manila had the highest number of registered voters in 2004—5.9 million. Coming in at close second was the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) region with 5.5 million registered voters. Cordillera Administrative Region had the least number of voters (more than 700,000). All in all, 43.5 million Filipinos registered to vote in the 2004 election.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

655,000 BECAUSE OF WAR

Iraq death toll study sound, say experts

NEW YORK—A CONTROVERSIAL NEW study contends nearly 655,000 Iraqis have died because of the war, suggesting a far higher death toll than other estimates. President George W. Bush says he does not believe it, and experts were divided on whether it is sound.

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and the Al Mustansiriya University in Baghdad derived that estimate from a door-to-door survey, conducted by doctors, of 1,849 households in Iraq. Taking the number of deaths reported by household residents, they extrapolated to a nationwide figure.

The researchers, reflecting the inherent uncertainties in such extrapolations, said they were 95 percent certain that the real number lay somewhere between 392,979 and 942,636 deaths.

Even the smaller figure is almost eight times the estimate some others have derived.

The new study—which attributes roughly 600,000 of the deaths directly to violence and 55,000 more to other war-related causes—was released Wednesday on the web site of The Lancet, a respected medical journal. But just how good are its conclusions?

"I don't consider it a credible report," Bush said Wednesday.

Neither does Gen. George W. Casey, the top American military commander in Iraq.

"That 650,000 number seems way, way beyond any number that I have seen," Casey said. "I've not seen a number higher than 50,000. And so I don't give it that much credibility at all."

And neither does Michael E. O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution, which also tracks Iraqi deaths.

"I do not believe the new numbers. I think they're way off," he said.

Other research methods on the ground, like body counts, forensic analysis and taking eyewitness reports, have produced numbers only about one-tenth as high, he said. "I have a hard time seeing how all the direct evidence could be that far off ... therefore I think the survey data is probably what's wrong."

However, several biostatisticians and survey experts were supportive of the work.

"Given the conditions (in Iraq), it's actually quite a remarkable effort," said Steve Heeringa, director of the statistical design group at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

"I can't imagine them doing much more in a much more rigorous fashion."

He said the study made "minor departures" from the standards generally used in national surveys for choosing what households to interview. Whether those departures, brought on by wartime conditions in Iraq, introduced a bias in the results is impossible to measure from the data alone, he said.

Frank Harrell Jr., chair of the biostatistics department at Vanderbilt University, called the study design solid and said it included "rigorous, well-justified analysis of the data."

And Richard Brennan, head of health programs at the New York-Based International Rescue Committee, said the study's survey approach was typical.

"This is the most practical and appropriate methodology for sampling that we have in humanitarian conflict zones," said Brennan, whose group has conducted similar projects in Kosovo, Uganda and Congo.

"While the results of this survey may startle people, it's hard to argue with the methodology at this point." *AP*

A YOUNG girl is comforted during a ceremony to mark the fourth anniversary of the Bali bombings at Sydney's Coogee Beach, Thursday. 202 people—among them 88 Australians—lost their lives when terrorist bombs ripped through two nightclubs on the Indonesian resort island on Oct. 12, 2002. AP

Indonesia marks 2002 Bali blasts anniversary

KUTA, INDONESIA—INDONESIANS AND FOREIGNERS on Bali marked the fourth anniversary of deadly bombings by Islamic extremists Thursday with a series of emotional ceremonies and rituals on the resort island.

The Oct. 12, 2002 bombings on two nightclubs killed 202 people, mostly Western tourists, and were blamed on Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the al-Qaida-linked Southeast Asian terrorist network.

The atrocity claimed the lives of people from 22 countries. Australia, which for years saw Bali as its backyard playground, lost the largest number of victims, with 88.

At midnight, a 12-km length of cloth symbolizing peace was unfurled by a group of Balinese at Jimbaran beach, beginning at one of three cafés hit by a subsequent attack in October 2005.

The triple suicide bombing last year, also blamed on key JI members, killed 20 innocent bystanders.

The cloth was unrolled along the road to the front of the international airport and then to a memorial to the victims of the 2002 attacks in the busy tourist district of Kuta.

"The cloth has been placed on the road so that anyone can step on it. It is a symbol of our willingness to forget the past while at the same time recalling the tragedies that have hit this land," said Save Dagun, one of the organizers.

"We should not cry over those who died. They are like pearls, like martyrs who must push us towards peace," he said.

The ritual unleashed emotions among Bali residents. At the airport, one man stopped his car to get out. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Motion to oust Taiwan president

TAIPEI—Taiwan's parliament will vote Friday on a second recall motion aimed at ousting beleaguered President Chen Shui-bian over a string of corruption scandals implicating himself and his family. The 220-member parliament is to cast ballots on the motion early Friday, the second such vote in five months. If passed, a national referendum will be held in three months to determine Chen's future. The first recall effort failed to pass in June after falling short of the required two-thirds of lawmakers. Hundreds of thousands of people rallied on Taiwan's national day Tuesday against Chen in the largest protest of a month-long campaign, which was launched by pro-democracy veteran Shih Ming-teh demanding the president's resignation. *AFP*

In Britain, eased libel liability for journalists

LONDON—Britain's highest court on Wednesday ruled for the first time that journalists have the right to publish allegations about public figures, as long as their reporting is responsible and in the public interest. The ruling, a unanimous judgment by the Law Lords, is a huge shift in British law and significantly improves journalists' chances of winning libel cases in a court system that until now has been stacked against them. English judges have traditionally been so sympathetic to libel plaintiffs that many people from abroad have sued in English courts—even if the publications in question have tiny circulations here—because they have had a much better chance of winning here than they would back home. *NYT*

At least five dead in French train crash

ZOUFFTGEN, FRANCE—A double-decker passenger train from Luxembourg collided head-on with a goods train in north eastern France on Wednesday, killing at least five people—fewer than first thought. Rail officials said the trains were travelling on the same stretch of track because of maintenance work on an adjoining line, and slammed into each other in a wooded area near the Luxembourg border. *Reuters*

Heavy casualties in Sri Lanka fighting

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka's government admitted Thursday that 44 of its soldiers have been killed and 430 wounded in fighting with Tamil Tigers in the north of the island, while claiming 200 rebels were also killed. The heavy casualty figures came the day after Tamil Tiger rebels, in ferocious battles lasting over six hours, stalled a government offensive in the northern peninsula of Jaffna *AFP*

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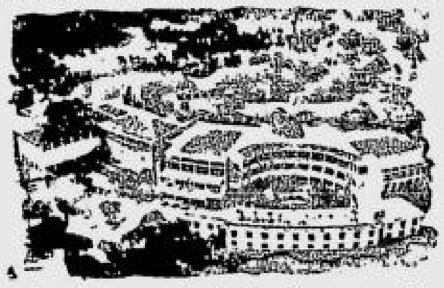

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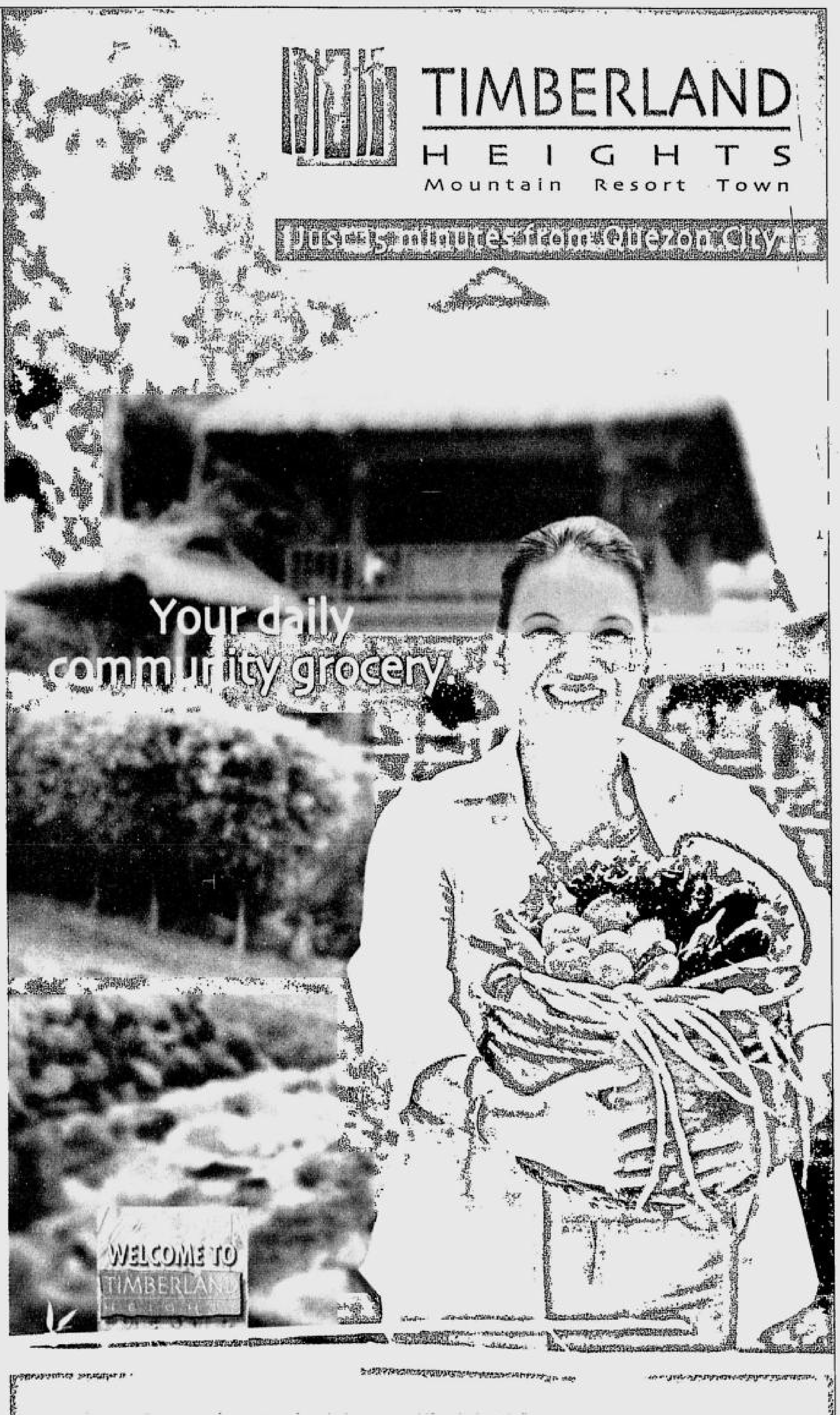

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

A FEMALE North Korean soldier stands guard at a military installation near the North Korean town of Sinui Oct. 12. AP

N. Korea warns of 'strong countermeasures' vs Japan

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA THREATENED JAPAN on Thursday with "strong countermeasures" if it goes ahead with tougher sanctions over Pyongyang's reported nuclear test.

Japan and the United States are pushing for tough measures against the North, although diplomats say China opposes the more punitive parts of a draft resolution Washington wants the UN Security Council to adopt in a vote, possibly on Friday.

"We will take strong countermeasures," said Song Il-ho, North Korean ambassador in charge of diplomatic normalization talks with Japan, according to a report by Japan's Kyodo news agency from Pyongyang.

"The specific contents will become clear if you keep watching," Song said. "We never speak empty words."

Japan, arguing that Pyongyang's nuclear weapons poses a direct threat to its safety, is expected to formally approve additional sanctions on Friday, including banning imports from the impoverished communist state and blocking North Korean ships from entering Japanese ports.

US President George W. Bush, speaking after Japan announced plans for extra sanctions, said on Wednesday: "In response to North Korea's actions we're working with our partners ... to ensure there are serious repercussions for the regime in Pyongyang." China, the nearest North Korea has to an ally, has flatly condemned its communist neighbor and backs limited sanctions but diplomats said it sees the US approach as too stringent.

"One can say that punishment isn't the goal," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Liu Jianchao told reporters on Thursday, saying any sanctions would be to coax North Korea back to talks.

There has so far been no independent confirmation that Monday's explosion was in fact the result of a nuclear device.

Some have speculated that even if it was, it might not have been as successful as Pyongyang claimed.

North Korea has brandished the threat of more tests, calling US pressure to rein in its nuclear program tantamount to a "declaration of war."

A UN Security Council vote on the US-drafted resolution could come on Friday, when the leaders of China and South Korea—on which Pyongyang relies for economic aid and a level of diplomatic protection—are also due to meet in Beijing.

Both countries are anxious to avoid driving the reclusive North—with its 1.2-million-strong army—further into a corner, possibly triggering instability on the Korean peninsula, which has been divided for more than half a century.

Analysts question how much sway Beijing and Seoul have over North Korea, which has recently shown it is prepared to shun its main benefactors.

US Ambassador John Bolton intends to introduce formally the resolution to the 15-member Security Council members in hopes of a vote on Friday. But China is expected to insist on further negotiations, diplomats said. *Reuters*

Thai PM embarks on damage control with envoys

BANGKOK, THAILAND—THAILAND'S new interim prime minister devoted Thursday to meetings with Asian, European, African and US diplomats, hoping to explain the post-coup political situation and repair the country's damaged reputation.

Meanwhile, the country's king endorsed a 242-member Parliament that was appointed by coup leaders and includes civil servants, military officers, police, politicians, Muslim leaders, journalists and lawyers.

Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont and Foreign Minister Nitya Pibulsonggram started their day of diplomacy in the morning with ambassadors from the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations, of which Thailand is a member.

More meetings were set with 23 diplomats from Asia and Africa, said government spokesperson Yongyuth Maiyalarb. Afternoon talks were slated with 11 diplomats from the United States and Pacific nations, followed by a session with 25 diplomats from European countries and Russia.

Thailand's new Cabinet was sworn in Monday, two weeks after a military coup ousted ex-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was accused of widespread corruption and abuse of power. Thaksin was on an official trip to New York during the Sept. 19 coup. He has since been in London.

Western nations and human rights groups have denounced the coup as a setback to democracy, and have urged the current government to quickly lift restrictions imposed by the military under martial law.

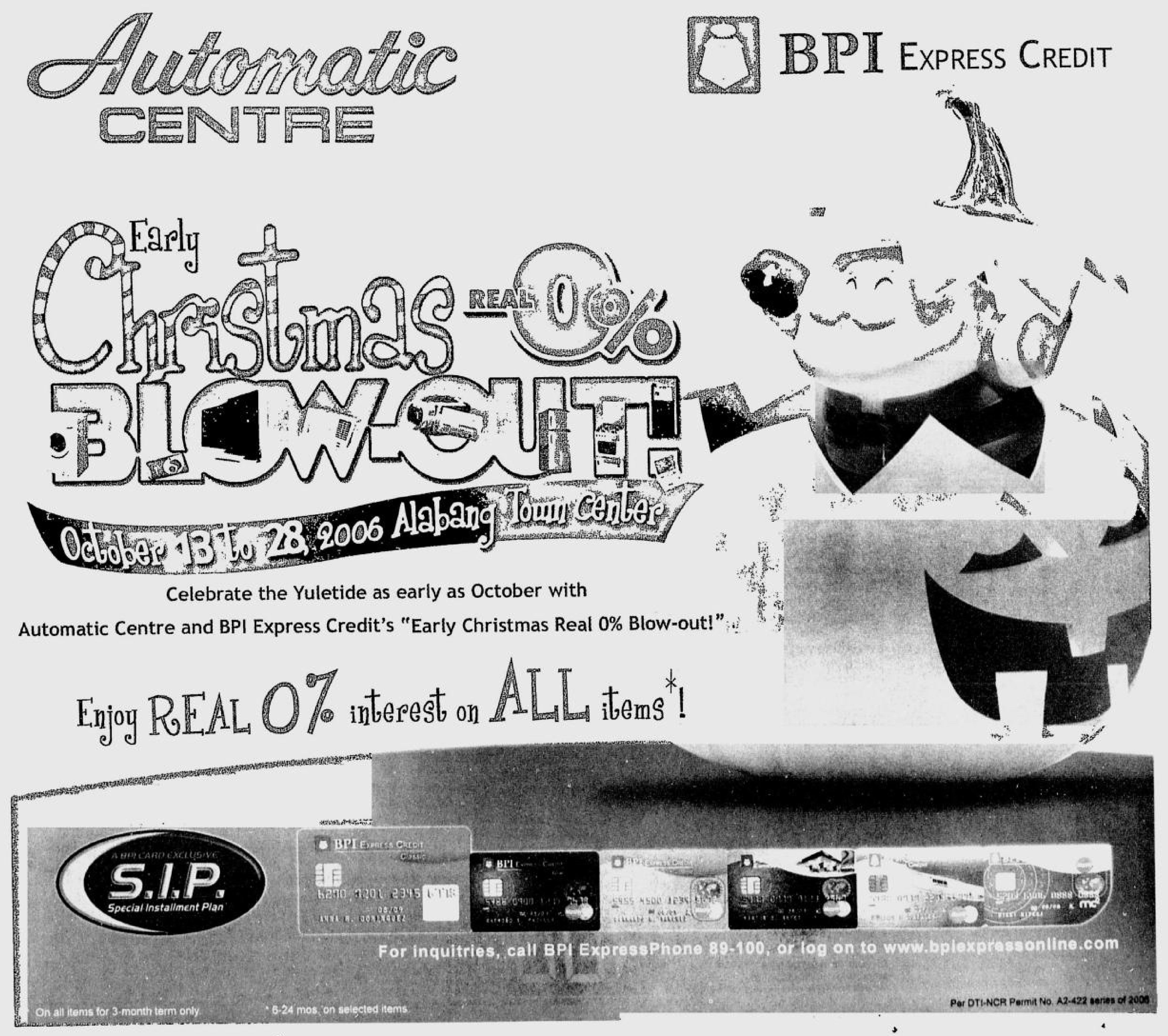
Surayud said he tried to assuage foreign diplomats' concerns about the coup, and assured them that his government would respect the commitments made with foreign nations during Thaksin's regime.

"I explained to them the urgent need to end the divisions and conflict in the nation," Surayud told reporters, adding that he hoped foreigners would give his administration time to prove itself before casting judgment. "I do believe that they will understand us more after my government resolves some problems."

Coup leaders are investigating Thaksin's alleged corruption, and accusations that he crafted policy to enrich himself and his family.

At Monday's swearing-in ceremony, Thailand's revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej urged the government to repair "the reputation of our country." *AP*

SURAYUD AP



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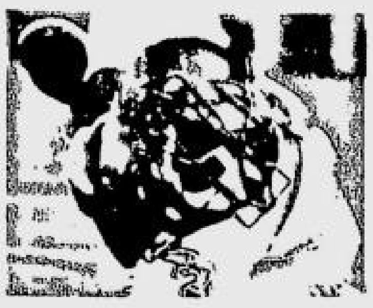

WHAT'S INSIDE

Hot Tigers feast on A's
/A32

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TNT Phone Pals, Bulls seek tie for lead

WHEN WELCOAT COACH LEO AUSTRIA JOKED ABOUT LOSING again after notching his first win in the Talk 'N Text PBA Philippine Cup, many knew that it could happen in his next game.

For the young and inexperienced Dragons, that game happens at 4:35 p.m. today when they collide with no less than the rock-solid Talk 'N Text Phone Pals at the resumption of the elimination round at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay.

The Dragons will be coming off the first win of their existence in the pro league after upending Coca-Cola in their second game last Sunday.

While Austria admitted that he "didn't expect to win (against Coca-Cola)," he also talked in jest about being prepared to lose again—a prospect many PBA pundits say the Dragons should expect soonest.

And Talk 'N Text coach Derrick Pumaren is not about to fall into the trap of complacency. He said teams like Welcoat—which really have nothing to lose—play their best against the best teams.

"That's a part of the coach's job, to make sure that your players come into a game prepared each time," said Pumaren, whose squad saw action in tournaments and tuneup games in the United States and South Korea.

STANDINGS	W	L
Ginebra	3	0
Talk 'N Text	2	0
Red Bull	2	0
Sta. Lucia	2	0
Welcoat	1	1
Alaska	1	2
San Miguel	0	2
Air21	0	2
Purefoods	0	2
Coca-Cola	0	2

GAMES TODAY (*Cuneta Astrodome*)
4:35 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs. Welcoat
7:20 p.m.—Red Bull vs. Coca-Cola

"We cannot take any team for granted."

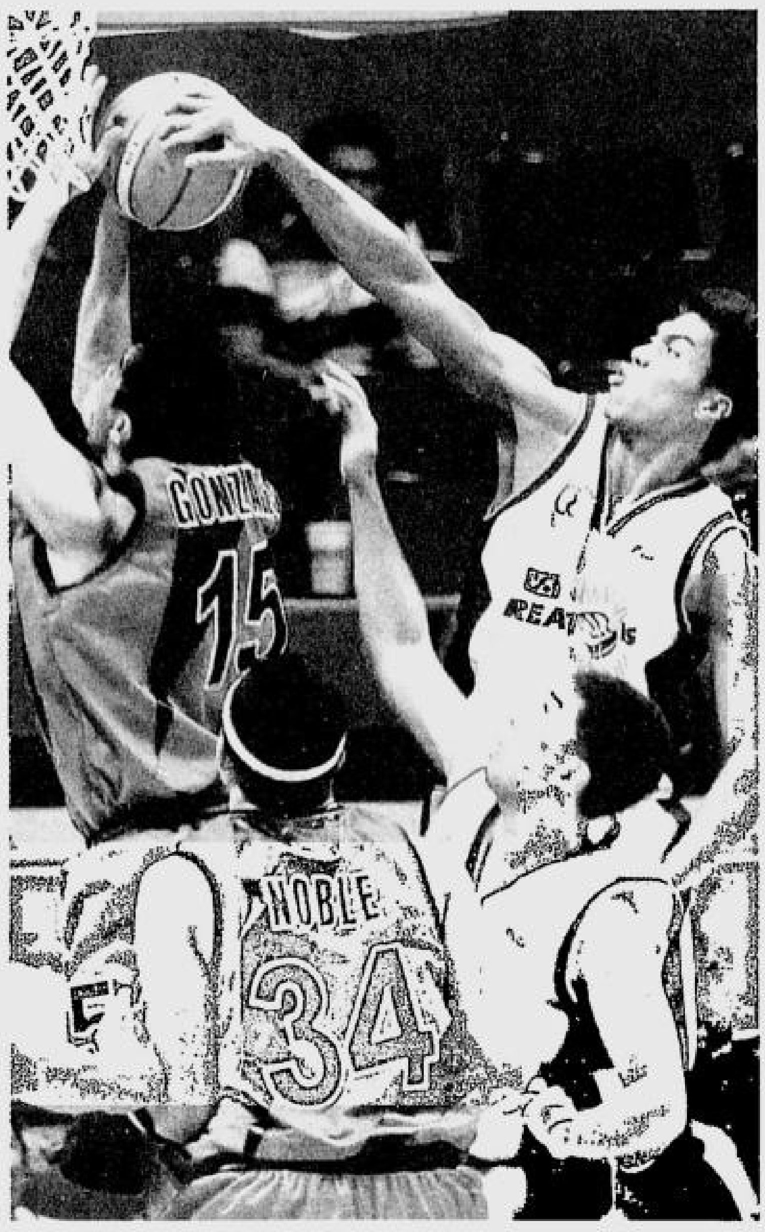
The Phone Pals, arguably the best prepared side in the field, will be shooting for their third straight win and a share of the lead with idle Barangay Ginebra.

That will also be the goal of Red Bull, which hopes to bury the Tigers deeper in their 7:20 p.m. clash.

The Bulls will be coming off victories against two solid teams—Alaska in Guam and San Miguel last week—and they are installed as the solid bets, like Talk 'N Text, against the Tigers who have shown more weak spots in their game than the bright ones.

Coca-Cola is in danger of becoming the league's whipping boy, no thanks to a lopsided trade where it gave away Rudy Hatfield, Billy Mamaril and Rafi Reavis to Ginebra through Air21.

Ali Peek and John Arigo are now left to carry the fight for the Tigers, who will be going up against a Red Bull team that was kept intact in the off-season and is teeming with talent on all fronts.



STA. LUCIA Realty's Nelbert Omolon comes from behind to reject a followup shot by Wesley Gonzales of San Miguel Beer during their game Wednesday. The Realtors prevailed, 98-95. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Bata, Django beat SMB 9-ball rivals

AS EXPECTED, FAVORITES Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Marlon Manalo hurdled their first two matches in the 2006 RP SMB 9-Ball Tour Open last night at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque City.

Reyes whipped Japan Open winner Antonio Lining, 9-5, and then exacted revenge over 2004 Fil-9 Ball ruler Antonio Gabica, 9-2, to advance with defending champion Bustamante and Manalo.

The 38-year-old Gabica whipped Richard Pomelosa, 9-2, in the first round but was outplayed by the determined Reyes in the second round.

In 2004, Gabica humbled Reyes twice by similar 9-5 scores in the Hope RP 9-Ball Open and Asian 9-Ball Tour in Singapore.

Bustamante, showing the form that enabled him to retain his Bali Open crown last month, bested John Salazar, 9-4, and followed it up with a 9-5 conquest of Russian

BATA/ A30

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EDWIN BACASMAS

FRANCIS Casey Alcantara returns to Korean Jeong Joo-wook.

Ferrer stuns second-seeded Korean

Joins Alcantara in semis; Santiago, Zoleta reach girl's last four

SEVENTH SEED FILIPINO JOSE Lorenzo Ferrer pulled off a 6-1, 0-6, 7-6 (7-4) upset win over the second-ranked South Korean Kim Ki-hoon yesterday to reach the boys' singles semifinals of the Asian 14-Under Series at the Ynares Socio-Cultural Sports Center courts in Pasig City.

The 13-year-old Ferrer, a Grade 7 student at Xavier School, showed his determination to win by coming back strong in the third set, where he adjusted well to Kim's net game and changed the pace of the rallies to force the tiebreaker.

Ferrer fell to 1-4 in the tiebreaker after missing two easy volleys but quickly regained his form to win the next six points.

Ferrer, the country's No. 2 player in 14-under play, arranged a clash with third seed Nuttorn Tanchainant, who scored a 7-5, 6-3 victory over Indonesian Rayadi Surya.

Nuttorn will go into the game with a psychological edge. He defeated Ferrer, 6-4, 6-4, in the Kuala Lumpur leg of the Asian 14-under Series last August, won the Bangladesh stop and settled for runner-up honors in Japan.

In other matches, top-seeded Francis Casey Alcantara blasted fifth seed Korean Jeong Joo-wook, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against fourth-ranked Korean Noh Sang-woo.

Noh showed the door to sixth seed Filipino Akio Sy, 6-4, 6-1.

In the girls' singles, unseeded Filipino Ma. Regina Santiago eliminated No. 4 Malaysian Adelle Chia-Yan, 7-6 (7-6), 6-0, to join top-seeded compatriot Noelle Nikki Zoleta in the semifinal round of this tournament sponsored by the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. and Wilson balls.

Santiago will face second seed Korean Han Na-lee, who beat Filipino Sarah Jane Lim, 7-5, 6-1, while Zoleta, a 6-0, 6-3 winner over No. 6 Japanese Fumika Kumagai, will meet third seed Korean Lee Se-won, who prevailed over No. 5 Malaysian Huey Ting Sia, 6-3, 6-2.

Lions, Lancers collide for Final 4 berth

THE SAN BEDA RED LIONS AND THE TOUGH University of the Visayas Lancers clash for a Final Four berth in the Collegiate Champions League today at the Rizal Coliseum.

Coach Koy Banal is admittedly uncertain how the Lions, the newly crowned NCAA champions, will measure up against the Visayan powerhouse in their 4 p.m. duel.

"We have to focus on the task at hand," said Banal. "They're a formidable team, they have a good coach. We have to stay with the basics on both ends."

The University of the East Warriors and the Philippine Christian University Dolphins dispute another semifinal slot earlier at 2 p.m.

The 10th-seeded Lancers pulled off the tournament's first upset, stunning the Adamson Falcons, 70-67, with Morsie Akad drilling in six of his 13 markers in the final stretch.

"Our outside shooting has been our advantage," said coach Boy Cabahug of the Lancers, champions in the Cebu School Athletic Foundation Inc. (Cesafi) for six straight years.

The Lions struggled in their first assignment due to the absence of their rookie NCAA Most Valuable Player Sam Ekwe, who has been nursing a hyper-extended right knee.

Yousif Aljamal, however, came through in the final minute to lead the Lions to a 75-72 escape over wild-card entry National University.

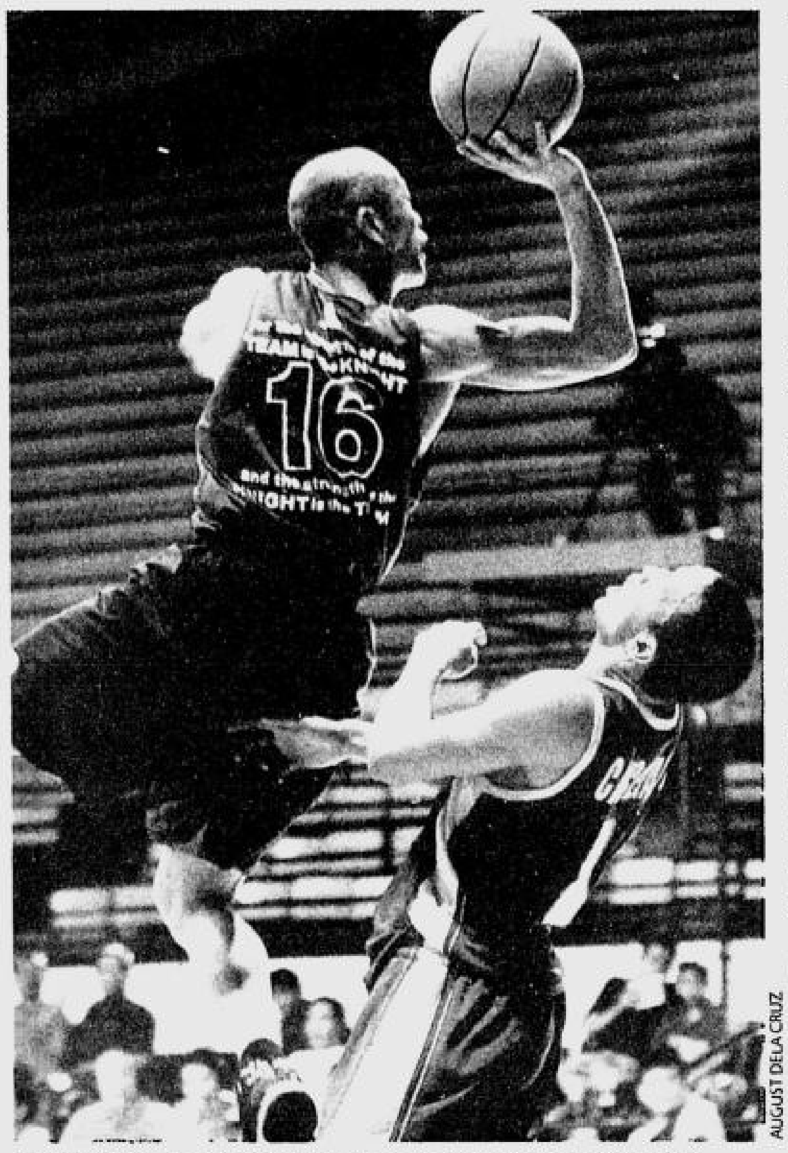
The Warriors, meanwhile, are coming off a week-long break after blasting the Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals, 84-60, in the tournament opener.

"It's always tough to play PCU," said UE coach Dindo Pumaren. "They have several experienced players, especially (Jason) Castro."

On Tuesday, Castro and Beau Belga teamed up PCU's second-half charge for a 95-88 win over Ama Computer.

Jasmine W. Payo

GAMES TODAY (*Rizal Coliseum*)
2 p.m.—UE vs PCU
4 p.m.—San Beda vs Univ. of Visayas


AUGUST DELA CRUZ

LETRAN'S Andro Gil Quinday makes an acrobatic shot off Jonathan Canceran of University of Cebu in a recent game. The Knights won, 81-71.

PBL draft: Magnolia gets 1st pick

LUCK HAS BEEN ON MAGNOLIA ICE CREAM'S side lately in the Philippine Basketball League.

Winner of two championships in the last five conferences, Magnolia will have a chance to beef up its already formidable roster after securing the top overall rookie draft pick.

Over 100 young players have applied for the draft set at 10 a.m. today at the PBL office at the Philippine Stock Exchange Center in Pasig City.

Magnolia obtained the top pick from last year's cellar-dweller TeleTech in exchange for veteran guard Kim Valenzuela.

University of the East Warriors Mark Borboran, Bonbon Custodio and UAAP slam dunk champion Elmer Espiritu, and Jonas Villanueva of the Far Eastern Tamaraws lead the talented pool of rookies.

Hapee will choose second, followed by Sista, Toyota Otis and new teams Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala and Mail & More.

Harbour Centre, champion of the last conference, won't be selecting in the first round.

Other aspirants include Fil-Australian twins Andre and Jonathan Plonsker, UE's Kelvin Gregorio and Lawrence Briones and nine National University cagers led by Edwin Asoro and Jonathan Fernandez.

"There are many choices, teams will surely have a difficult time," said PBL commissioner Chino Tridinad.

Jasmine W. Payo

POC wants all 267 athletes to be in Doha Asiad

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE APPROVED LIST OF 267 athletes to the Doha Asian Games will remain intact.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco made this assurance yesterday during a radio interview where he also stressed that if there's really a need to reduce the number of delegates, it's the officials who will have to go.

"We already have a solution without cutting down the number of athletes," said Cojuangco. "But if we're going to cut down, we cut down on the officials."

The Doha Asian Games Organizing Committee (Dagoc) had asked the participating countries to reduce their delegations by 15 percent due to the limited accommodations in their respective quarters at the Asian Games Village.

"We're already complying with the number of athletes the Dagoc asked," said Cojuangco, adding that the delegation of 400 athletes and officials may not be affected at all.

He noted that the RP contingent will not be staying in full force at the Village during the Dec. 1-15 duration of the Asiad and that the biggest representation of 316 at the Village will only take place on Dec. 8.

Because not all events will take place at the same time, the athletes who have finished their schedules will be going home early with their quarters to be taken over by their counterparts who will be checking in late at the Village.

Fierce duel seen in La Salle-Ateneo golf

GASTON

THE GREEN ARCHERS ARE COUNTING on fresh legs in their bid for a back-to-back victory in the third La Salle-Ateneo Match Play, a Ryder Cup-style golf meet slated Oct. 20-22 at the Sherwood Golf and Country Club in Cavite.

"Only about 60 percent (of the old roster) will return to our team," said La Salle playing captain Raffy Garcia, who has so far come up with eight of the 18-man lineup.

Named so far to the La Salle squad are Francis Gaston, Tommy Manotoc, Miko Alejandro, William Hong, JP Reyes, King Stehmeier and Louie Garcia.

Garcia said they will complete the lineup in the next two days, choosing from among a pool of 24 players.

Ateneo, the inaugural champion, is fielding an almost intact lineup.

"We think we have a big chance of winning the title this year," said Ateneo captain Teboy Javier. "We have seasoned players in the team."

Ten players have so far been named for Ateneo. They are Katrina Gonzalez, Lovely Guioguio, Iggy Clavecilla, Manoling Chan, Jose Mari Hechanova, Jingy Tuason, Junjun Plana, Anthony Fernando, Marcel Puyat and Jeric Hechanova.

Last year at Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio, the Archers defeated the Blue Eagles, 23-19, despite being clobbered in singles competition on the final day.

Ateneo won 12 of 18 singles matches, but could not overhaul La Salle's commanding lead in team play.

The Archers routed the Eagles, 10-2, in foursome matches and dominated fourball play, 7.5-4.5, to build a 17.5-6.5 cushion going into the final day.

The event, organized by the Club Leisure Management Corp., was launched three years ago to promote camaraderie among La Salle and Ateneo players.

No salvation for RP sports without gov't support

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THROUGHOUT MY LONG CAREER AS A sports journalist, I have always batted for adequate funding from the government to help the various national sports associations, whose coffers are always empty.

While it is true that the government has the Philippine Sports Commission to provide financial assistance to the NSAs, it does not have enough money to support an honest-to-goodness nationwide development program, including the quest to win that elusive Olympic gold. Methinks, sport is not a priority and therefore does not enjoy adequate funding.

Having said that, is it any wonder why the United States is the envy of the sporting world? The US, which has no sports agency or ministry, is the only country (with one or two exceptions) where sport is financed entirely by the private sector.

Its National Olympic Committee, according to "Olympic Message," an official publication of the International Olympic Committee, has a budget of almost $400 million per Olympiad. What some governments wouldn't give for that!

In contrast, the Philippine Senate recently approved an outlay of only P108 million for the upkeep of Philippine sports in 2007.

Except for basketball which survives on the huge income it generates from its many sponsors throughout the year, the other sports are not so lucky. The fate of most of these impoverished NSAs will remain unchanged. The possibility of improving for the better is a long way off in view of the prevailing economic situation.

As South Korean taekwondo guru Hong Sung-chong said, sports should be a national concern.

In an interview with INQUIRER sportswriter Francis Ochoa, Hong, a longtime Manila resident, recalled the glory days of Project: Gintong Alay. Said he: "It was so successful because it was directly under the President."

Then President Ferdinand Marcos created Gintong Alay (sometime in 1979) and appointed his favorite nephew, the imperious Michael Keon, as its director. A former track and field athlete who now runs the sports program of Ilocos Norte, Keon was credited with producing medal winners like Asian sprint queen Lydia de Vega, middle distance runner Isidro del Prado and long jump champion Elma Muros.

Surely, the government should remain the primary supporter of sports, particularly in a developing country like ours. In addition to providing financial assistance, other government agencies/departments help in many other ways.

The defense department, for example, recruits top men and female athletes in the various services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and, among others, provides sea, land and air transport to their national players. Schools grant scholarships to deserving student-athletes and loan their sports facilities to impoverished clubs, while the health department supplies the medicines and the medical needs of the national teams to international meets.

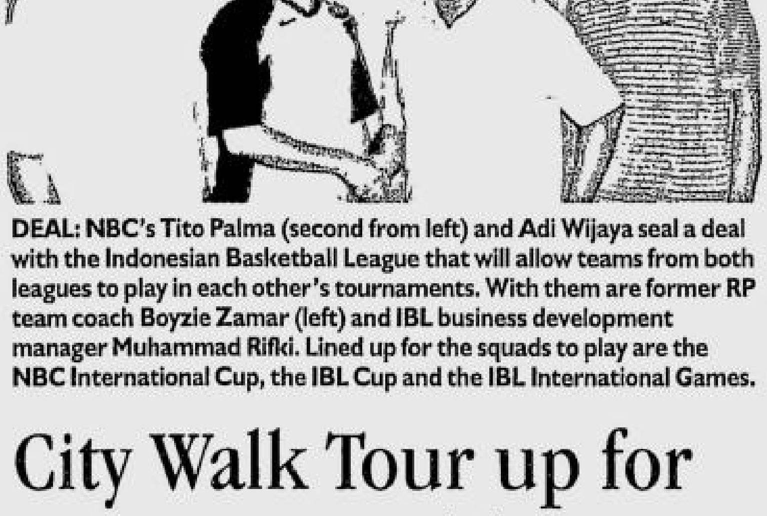
On many occasions, including the last Southeast Asian Games hosted by the country, security was provided by police authorities headed by the Philippine National Police. Basically, nothing is done without the participation of the government.

There is no question that the private sector plays an important role in sports development, but—as I have said before—there is no salvation for sports without government support.

As Manila Rep. Jaime Lopez once said, "With the support of the government, we can fully tap and develop the ability, competence and potential of the Filipino to become an athlete par excellence."

* * *

SSS MEYCAUAYAN, TAKE A BOW: I salute the staff of the Social Security System in Meycauayan, Bulacan, for their courteous and efficient service to the public. My hats off to OIC Pablita David and her assistant, Elizabeth Cruz.



DEAL: NBC's Tito Palma (second from left) and Adi Wijaya seal a deal with the Indonesian Basketball League that will allow teams from both leagues to play in each other's tournaments. With them are former RP team coach Boyzie Zamar (left) and IBL business development manager Muhammad Rifki. Lined up for the squads to play are the NBC International Cup, the IBL Cup and the IBL International Games.

City Walk Tour up for MY Games athletes

ORGANIZERS OF THE 2ND MY GAMES NATIONAL INVITATIONAL PLANS TO hold a "City Walk Tour" for all athletes and officials participating in games slated Oct. 22-29 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and San Andres Sports and Civic Center. Manila Sports Council (Masco) chair Arnold "Ali" Atienza has instructed his staff to plot a two- to four-kilometer route around the capital city's premier historic and tourist attractions for the Walk Tour. Helping stage the Tour are the Tourism, Cultural, Park and Recreation, Traffic Management bureaus as well as concerned units of City Hall of the sportsfest backed by Converse, San Miguel Corporation, Super Ferry, Tanduay, Landbank, Metrobank, Milo, Velprint Printing, Spurway Enterprises, Jex Nylon Shuttles, IntrASports and Concept Movers. Starting from the City Hall landmarks, the participants will see and visit the newly built Martial Law Memorial Wall and Universidad De Manila

Bata, Django beat SMB 9-ball rivals

From page A29

Petiza, who trounced Eleazar Saludo, 9-6, in the opener.

The 29-year-old Manalo, runner-up in the 2006 North American IPT 8-ball shootout last July, crushed Antonio Cusi, 9-2, and Eric Taneo, 9-5, respectively. In the first round, Taneo stunned Jeffrey de Luna, 9-7.

Not as fortunate was former AZbilliards Rookie of the Year Ronato Alcano, who suffered a heartbreaking 8-9 loss to Leonardo Didal and dropped to the loser's bracket.

Meanwhile, Carlo Biado won over Bienvenido Soliman, 9-4.

Organized by Solar Sports Entertainment, the event, using the double-elimination system, offers a total pot of P1,350,000 with the winner getting P500,000. The runner-up placer gets P250,000 while the losing semifinalists each receive P100,000.

Reyes, Bustamante and Manalo are playing under the stable of local billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat.

The early rounds will be Raceto-9, the semifinal round race-to-13 and the finals race-to-17, all via the alternate break format.

Marlon Bernardino., contributor

PSC opens door to BAP; Jinggoy meets Peping

By Roy Luarca and Marc Anthony Reyes

ESTRADA

THE DOOR IS NOW LITERALLY OPEN for the return of the Basketball Association of the Philippines to the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The BAP will be allowed to use its former office at the second floor of the RMSC starting on Monday, according to Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, newly elected president of the BAP, following an assurance from Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez yesterday morning.

"Chairman Ramirez assured me that it (BAP office) will be opened on Monday," said Estrada, who was acclaimed BAP president on Thursday after former senator Joey Lina relinquished the post on Tuesday.

The BAP office was padlocked by the PSC on May 28 as a consequence of the Philippine Olympic Committee's expulsion of the cage body in June last year.

Since then, the BAP, which continues to be recognized by the international basketball federation (Fiba), has been holding office at a rented unit at Citiland Condominium, just across the RMSC premises along Vito Cruz in Manila.

Earlier, Estrada met with POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Wednesday night to get the real lowdown on the falling out between the BAP and the local Olympic body.

"It was apparent from the meeting that the Senator was inadequately informed," said the source privy to the meeting. "The BAP people may not have given him the total picture."

The same source said Estrada explored the possibility of the BAP getting reinstated to the POC, but, the source added, Cojuangco explained that it was no longer feasible.

"Cojuangco asked Estrada to just go over the documents and agreements signed by (his predecessor) Joey Lina. He was told that The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas already has the imprimatur of the Fiba and it's better to go by the Fiba formula," said the source.

The cordial meeting lasted for one and a half hours at the lobby of the Manila Peninsula.

Estrada also is reportedly seeking to take Lina's place in the three-man committee that created the SBP along with chair and president, PLDT/Smart boss Manny V. Pangilinan and Pilipinas Basketball president Bernie Atienza.

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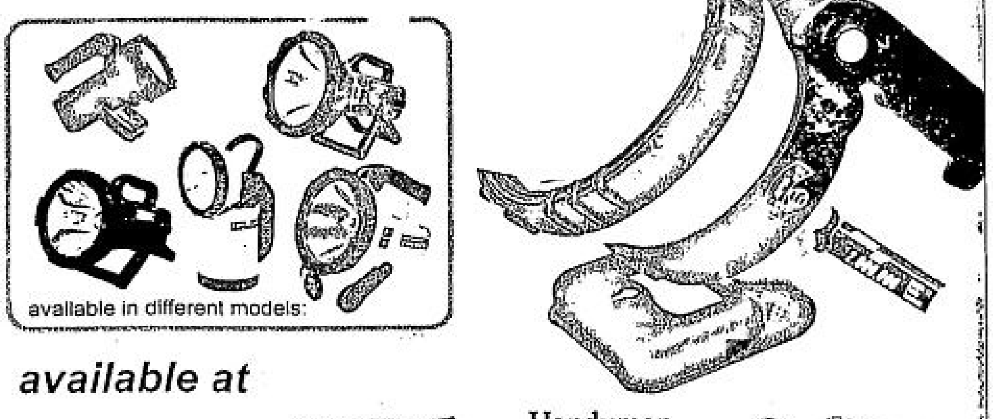

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Gomez bounces back

FILIPINO NATIONAL MASTER JOHN PAUL GOMEZ, invigorated by the one-day tournament break, bounced back in contention by beating International Master Fidel Corrales of Cuba in the the eighth round of the World Junior Boys and Girls Chess Championship at the Petrosian Chess House in Yerevan, Armenia, late Wednesday. Gomez boosted his total to 4.5 points and climbed to a share of 23rd to 35th places. Playing white, the 20-year-old Mechanical Engineering student of DLSU-Taft, created a passed pawn on his 25th move and went on to prevail after 56 moves of their Closed Sicilian Duel. Gomez will face GM Le Quang Liem of Vietnam in the ninth round. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Battle at Midway Oct. 14

THIS YEAR'S SILVER GLOVES 3 TOURNAMENT, dubbed "Battle at Midway" of Red Corner Fitness and Boxing Club will be held at 5 p.m. tomorrow at the Amorsolo Ballroom of the Holiday Inn Galleria in Ortigas, coinciding with the launch of Red Corner Ortigas branch. The inter-club event will be participated in by all Red Corner branches and will feature 20 amateur boxing matches composed of 10 bouts for the men's division, four bouts for the women's division and six bouts trainer's division. There will also be Muay Thai, Bhuddha Belly and Hip-Hop Dance exhibitions. For details, visit www.redcornerboxing.net or call 634-9943 or visit the gym at the 5th floor, Holiday Inn Galleria Manila, ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

PCCA stagfest today

COMPETITION IN THE PASAY COCKPIT ASSOCIATION (PCCA) Stagfighter of the Year battle heats up today via a special 5-stag derby at the Pasay City Cockpit. The 90-fight program, supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, starts at 3 p.m. Magsi of Magno Lim topped last week's fourth leg of the PCCA series. Pasay Cockpit will also host the 3-stag elimination round of Labanan Stag series on Oct. 20. Pit manager Eric dela Rosa advised participants to bring proof of purchase (P1,000) of any Sagupaan products. For inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 or 816-6750.

Sabungero 5-stag battles up

A SPECIAL 5-STAG DERBY ORGANIZED BY THE staff of Sabungero magazine, will be staged at the San Juan Coliseum tomorrow with the backing of Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Allowed stags are those banded by GCAP, LGBA, Tagba, GBAT, Migba, KGBA, GF-BAN and Bakbakan, said host Neil Tuazon. Entries must be submitted today, from 2-9 p.m. Participants may call 725-5369 and 725-5665. The Bugbugan Sa SJC 5-stag derby of Louie Cua and Dori Du unwraps on Oct. 21 with 40 entries. The second leg of the SJC Circuit 5-stag derby comes next on Oct. 23.

Tagaytay Poker Challenge all set

THE TAGAYTAY HOLD'EM POKER CHALLENGE Part III gets under way tomorrow at the Casino Filipino Tagaytay in Tagaytay City.

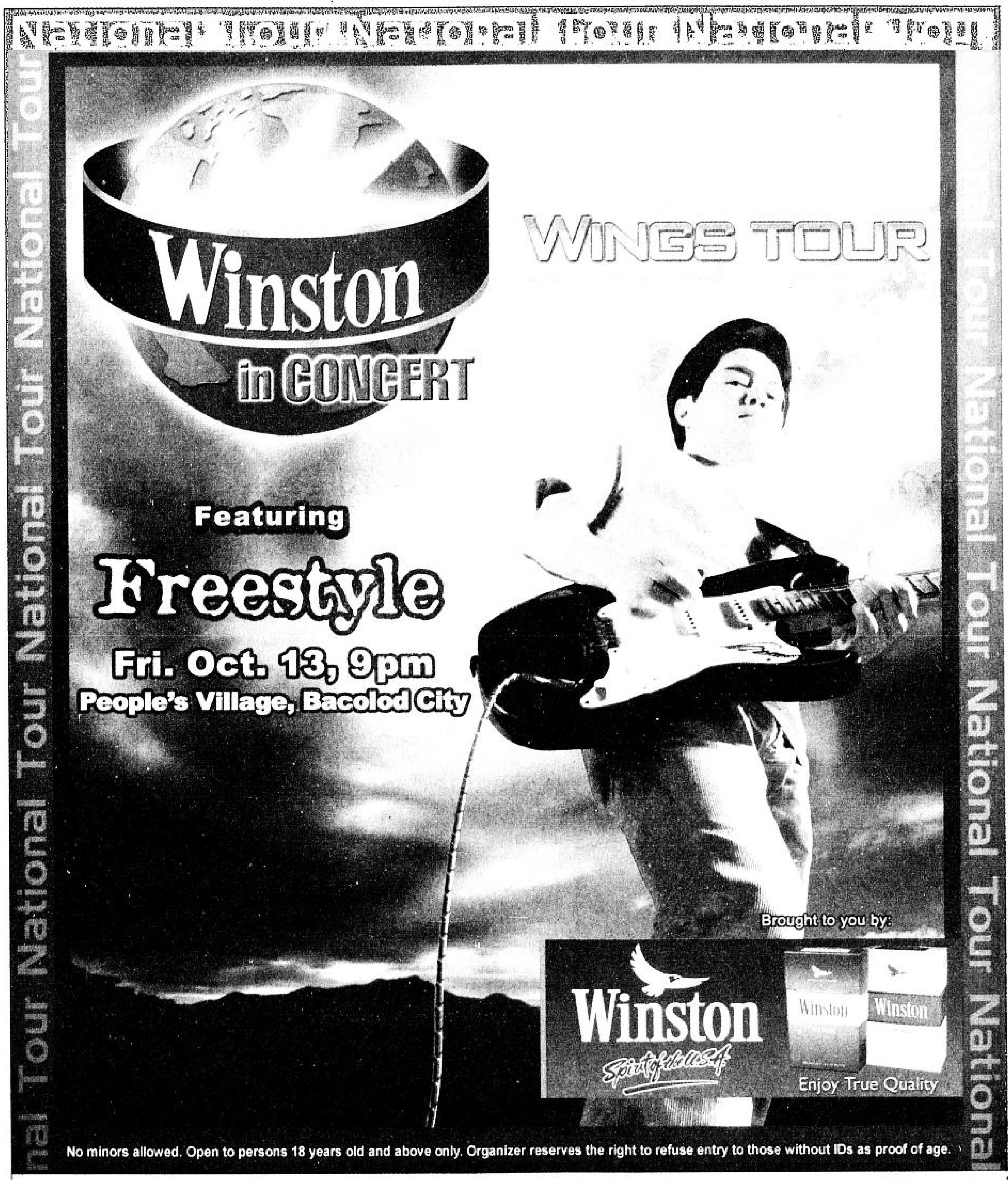
Winners of this satellite event, part of the Philippine Poker Tour (PPT), will earn seats to the grand finals of the Million-Peso Hold'em Philippine Championship slated Dec. 16-17 at the Casino Filipino Pavilion, Manila.

They will join previous Tagaytay Hold'em winners, namely, Patt Mendoza, Herbert Uy, Gregory Pratt, Victoria Lopez, Garry Gabionza and the popular lady player known as "Lady M."

After the Tagaytay leg, the tour will move to key cities in Visayas and Mindanao.

First stop is the Bacolod Challenge to be held at Casino Filipino Bacolod on Oct. 21, followed by the Cebu-Lahug Challenge at the Casino Filipino Waterfront Hotel on Oct. 28, Casino Filipino Mactan-Cebu on Nov. 11 and Casino Filipino Davao on Nov. 25.

For inquiries, call the PPT Secretariat (c/o Cindy) at 817-9092 or 812-0153.



No minors allowed. Open to persons 18 years old and above only. Organizer reserves the right to refuse entry to those without IDs as proof of age.

Government Warning:
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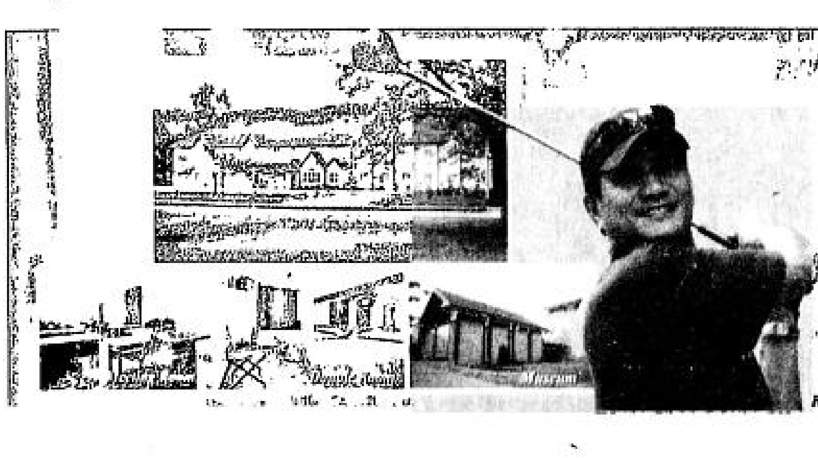

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Detroit grabs 2-0 lead

Baseball mourns death of Yankees pitcher

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA—ALEXIS Gomez hit a go-ahead, two-run single and later added a two-run homer Wednesday to lead the Detroit Tigers to an 8-5 victory over the Oakland Athletics in Game 2 of the American League championship series.

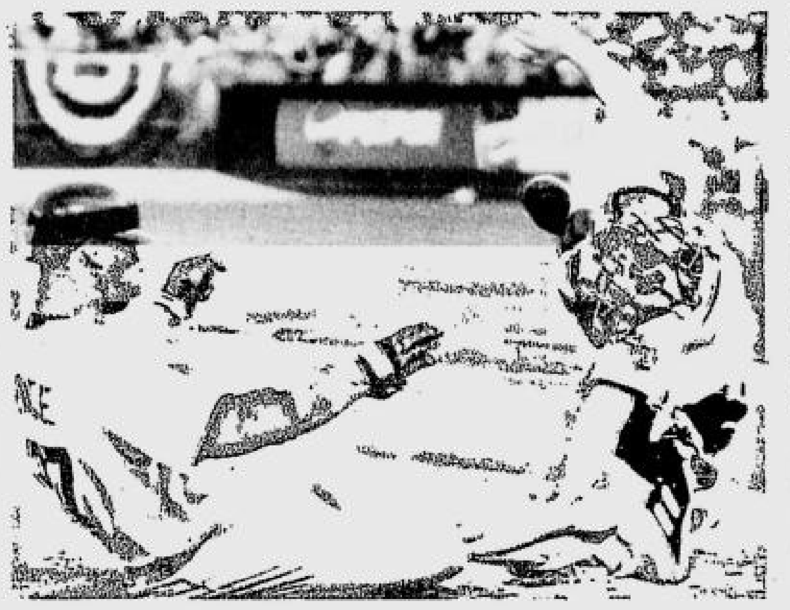
The ALCS now returns to Detroit with the Tigers holding a 2-0 lead.

A moment of silence was held before the national anthem for former A's pitcher Cory Lidle, who died in a plane crash earlier in the day. Lidle most recently pitched for the Yankees on Saturday in Detroit and spent the 2001 and '02 seasons in Oakland.

A career minor leaguer, Gomez had just one home run in the majors and contributed only six RBIs in 103 at-bats this season.

"He does have big-time power," Tigers coach Leyland said. "Unfortunately, he showed most of it in batting practice."

Milton Bradley homered twice for the A's, and beat out an infield hit with two outs in the ninth inning that loaded the bases. But closer Todd Jones retired Frank Thomas on a harmless fly for his second save in these playoffs.



CRAIG Monroe (left) of the Tigers slides in safely past the tag from catcher Jason Kendall of the Athletics. AFP

"What a challenge," Jones said. "It was a lot of fun. We're up 2-0 and we're going back to Detroit."

Game 3 in the best-of-seven series is Friday at Detroit's Comerica Park, featuring Rich Harden for Oakland against former A's pitcher Kenny Rogers.

Harden, who returned to make three late-season starts after missing more than three months with an elbow injury, did not pitch during the division series sweep of the Minnesota Twins. Rogers pitched shutout ball against the New York Yankees in Game 3.

Leyland, who turned around the Tigers in his first season as their manager, benched righty Marcus Thames and his 26 regular-season home runs in favor of Gomez, who hadn't been on the field in nearly two weeks and spent much of the year at Triple-A Toledo.

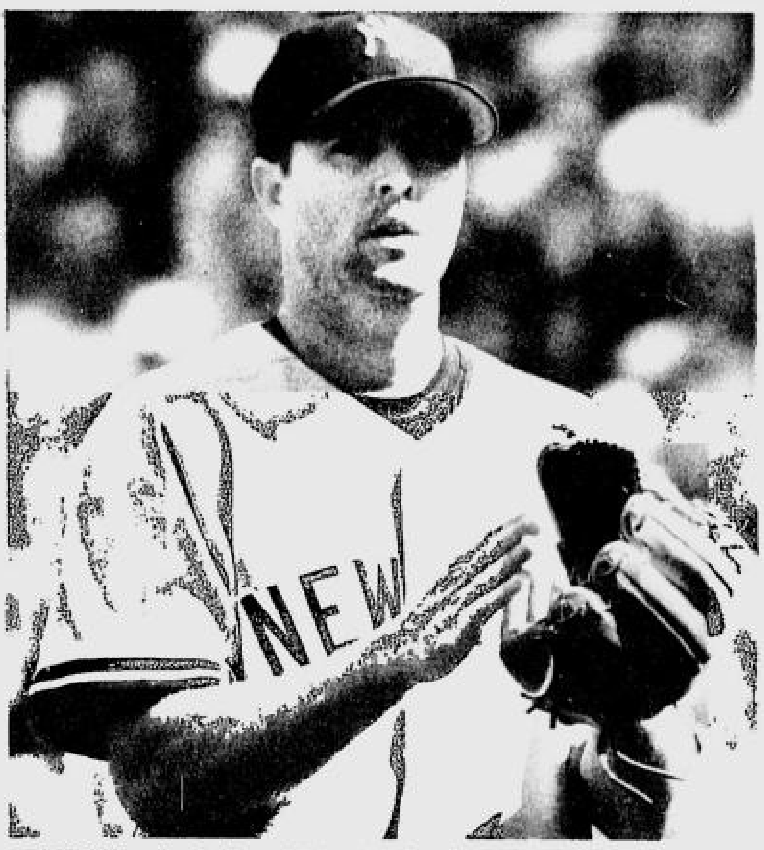
"We just took a shot that maybe, by chance, a lefty may have a shot," Leyland said beforehand.

Leyland already had to reshuffle his lineup to replace Sean Casey after the first baseman injured his calf in Tuesday's opener. The moves paid off and the Tigers won their fifth straight postseason game.

Leyland gave Detroit general manager Dave Dombrowski a courtesy heads-up about the switch at DH.

"I won't question who he plays," Dombrowski said.

The switch-hitting Bradley homered from both sides of the plate, drove in four runs and managed not to spill coffee on starter Esteban Loaiza this time. *AP*



CORY Lidle, who believed flying is safer than driving, tried to spend every spare moment in the air. AP

Lidle: The 'scab' who loved flying

NEW YORK—ON THE MOUND, Cory Lidle lived on the edge. Off the field, he was the same way.

Pitching and flying, those were his passions. And cruising above the clouds in his own plane, he felt free—and free from the bounds of a troubling season.

"Yeah, it's risky, but no more risky than driving a car," he said in August.

Criticized by former teammates in Philadelphia and attacked in the New York media, Lidle looked forward to piloting himself back home to California once the Yankees lost in the playoffs.

Instead, the 34-year-old Yankees pitcher was killed along with a second person Wednesday when his small plane crashed into a 40-story skyscraper in Manhattan.

Lidle got his pilot's license last offseason, bought his own plane and tried to spend every spare moment in the air.

A friend of Lidle's said the pitcher had phoned earlier Wednesday to say he would stop in Nashville, Tennessee, on his way to California.

"He called me about 11:30 this morning and said that he was still planning on coming in," Dave Whitis told radio station wgFX.

Lidle agreed to a $6.3 million, two-year deal with the Phillies in November 2004. The contract contained a provision saying the team could get out of paying the remainder if he was injured or killed while piloting a plane.

Because the regular season was over, Lidle had already received the full amount in the contract.

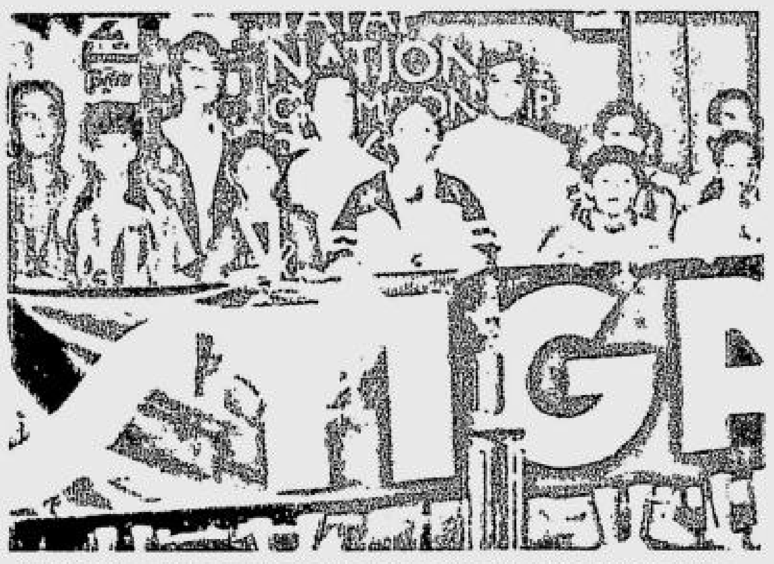
Lidle went 82-72 with a 4.57 ERA in a career that started in 1997. He played for the New York Mets, Tampa Bay, Oakland, Toronto, Cincinnati, Philadelphia and the Yankees.

Still in the minors, Lidle played one game for the Milwaukee Brewers in a 1995 spring training game while major leaguers were on strike. That one-inning stint as a replacement player haunted him later in his career, and Lidle was taunted as a "scab" by Phillies pitcher Arthur Rhodes after being traded to the Yankees on July 30.

Then Lidle was dropped from the Yankees' postseason rotation, reduced to a relief role instead of starting in the surprising four-game loss to Detroit. After the defeat, Lidle was quoted as saying the Yankees weren't as prepared as the Tigers.

Lidle played in high school with Jason Giambi, and they were teammates in Oakland. They were reunited this season on the Yankees.

"Right now, I am really in a state of shock," Giambi said in a statement. "I have known Cory and his wife, Melanie, for over 18 years and watched his son grow up. We were excited to be reunited in New York this year and I am just devastated to hear this news." *AP*



NATIONAL table tennis champs during the awarding ceremonies.

RP standouts top table tennis tilt

NATIONAL TEAM MEMBERS Efren Ebuen III and Louise Tabulao bagged the men's women's singles titles in the National Table Tennis championships that ended last weekend at the SM Megamall.

Ebuen, carrying the colors of the Lo Pue Table Tennis Association, outclassed former RP mainstay Michael Dalumpines of the Star Paper Table Tennis Club, 3-0.

Tabulao, seeing action for the Andro Tennis Club, subdued College of St. Benilde's Ayra Malabayabas, 3-1.

The highlight of the five-day event organized by the Table Tennis Association of the Philippines was the battle for the men's crown between Philippine National Police and Harrison Plaza Table Tennis Club.

It all came down to the last game of the last match of the best-of-five series pitting RP team member Rodel Valle and national women's coach Bong Palermo.

Valle, who earlier collapsed in the first game after leading by 10-6, won the last three games to score a riveting 12-14, 9-11, 13-11, 11-7, 11-6 victory as PNP rallied from a 0-2 deficit to complete a 3-2 triumph.

"We would like to offer this win to Police Chief Director General Oscar Calderon," said proud PNP team manager and Tatap board member Dodong Ortalla said.

The event is sponsored by Stiga, the official ball, Rush fitness drink, Sports Central and MyDSL broadband Internet.

Topcoms marketing manager John Malvin Lim, whose company is the exclusive distributor of Stiga table tennis products, gave away special prizes to the team and individual winners.

"We hope to bring more tournaments closer to the public by staging more future Tatap tournaments in the future," Tatap president Victor Valbuena said.

Inspiring Issai finds treasure in Shenzhen ice

By Francis Ochoa

IT MIGHT BE A BIT OF a stretch to find an ice skating champion in a tropical country. But that hasn't stopped Anna Isabelle Villafuerte from achieving her goals.

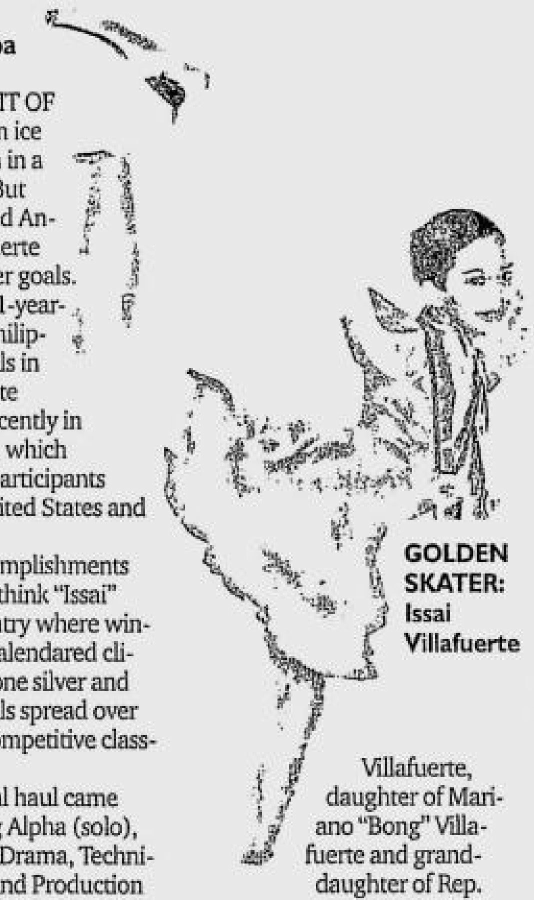
The talented 11-year-old won for the Philippines seven medals in the recent Ice Skate Asia 2006 held recently in Shenzhen, China, which drew a horde of participants from Asia, the United States and the Middle East.

The list of accomplishments would make one think "Issai" grew up in a country where winter is part of the calendared climate: four gold, one silver and two bronze medals spread over seven different competitive classes.

The gold medal haul came from the Stroking Alpha (solo), Couple Spotlight Drama, Technical Alpha (solo) and Production Number (team).

The silver medal came from Solo Spotlight while the bronze medals were tabbed in the Surprise Alpha and Jump and Spin solos.

Her efforts helped Team Philippines successfully defend its title in the prestigious event, and setting up a possible hat trick next year, when the country hosts the 2007 edition.



GOLDEN SKATER: Issai Villafuerte

Villafuerte, daughter of Mariano "Bong" Villafuerte and granddaughter of Rep. Luis R. Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, is now preparing for the Bandung International Ice Skating Institute Open in Indonesia and the Skate Asia Winter Classic in Singapore later in the year.

Her goal is the International Competition in the US in July 2007 and the Winter Olympics.

Marathon champions ready to Run for Life

ALL IS SET FOR THIS SATURday's WRR 101.9 Run for Life, a benefit running event for the intensive care unit of Ospital Ng Maynila, at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

More than 2,000 runners are expected to answer the starting gun set to be fired by Sen. Alfredo Lim at exactly 6 a.m.

Now on its third year, "WRR Run For Life!" features a three-kilometer run for kids 12 years old and below and five- and 10-kilometer races for older participants.

Cash prize amounting to P112,000 awaits the top three finishers of these events.

Reigning National Milo Marathon champions Cresenciano Sabal of the Philippine Army and Jho-an Banayag of Davao City are expected to defend their respective 10K titles on Saturday.

Registration is still going on at the dzMM Public Service Center, ABS-CBN Foundation Bldg., Mother Ignacia St., Quezon City. Registration fee is P150 for 5K and 10K, and P100 for the 3K run.

Also supporting the WRR Run for Life are the city governments of Manila and Pasay, Manila Police District, Pasay City Traffic Management Office and TEO, Philippine National Red Cross, Philippine Center for Sports Medicine and Targa.

Navy pins 2nd loss on La Salle in Razon football

GAME FRIDAY ***(Ateneo HS)***
6:30 p.m.—Ateneo vs. Air Force
Games Sunday ***(Philsports)***
1:30 p.m.—Lion FC vs. La Salle
3:30 p.m.—Army vs. FEU
5:30 p.m.—Kaya FC vs. Union FC

STRIKER JOSE ALFIE CAMINOS SCORED two goals in the last 17 minutes to power Navy to a come-from-behind 2-1 win over La Salle last Sunday in the Terry Razon Copa Filipina football tournament at the Philsports pitch in Pasig City.

Caminos tallied the equalizer in the 73rd on a penalty kick then capped his heroics with aanother goal seven minutes later to give the Seamen their first win in the tournament held in honor of the late soccer patron Terry Razon.

Far Eastern U upset San Beda College, 2-0, mentored by national coach Aris Caslib no less, in the other match of the event organized by the National Capital Region Football Association.

La Salle forward Paul Lustre saw an opening in the 63rd minute, volleying from 15 yards to break the ice.

This galvanized Navy to action as it pressed the attack before being rewarded with Lustre's tying marker off a handball violation in the penalty area. Lustre coolly slotted in the penalty to the right of the goal.

Francis Gustilo and Dennis Montialbucio scored a goal in each half as the FEU booters stunned the three-time NCAA football champions.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—At All Cost (1), Looney Tune (2), Camberwell Beauty (3)

Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Top of D'Line (2), Valiente (3), Demolition Jack (4), Nitty Gritty (9), Imperial Manila (7)

Race 3—(Tri)—El Cid (1), All Class (4), Lady Victoria (3)

Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Virginia (5), Dark Desert (2), Ruah (3), Honor Dance/Mystic Dragon (4)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Control Freak (2), The Bosss Daughter (4), Mojito (1), Zybaida (5)

Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Don't Tell Ella (6), Hakuna Matata (2), Maria Makiling (3), Stop Talking (4)

Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—Valentine Girl (6), Rho Sig (7), Golden Issue (2), Sky Bound (7)

Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Rivendel (8), Ayan Na Ko/Kai Jason (1), Music Express (2), Easy Rider (3), Burst Of Speed (6)

Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Misss Vicky (2), Hoy Sobra Na (8), Tribeca (4), Sa Wakas (7), Kiwi Rose (5), Ravishing Rafly (6)

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Gov't set to beef up state workers' pay

Initial allotment of ₱10B to be included in '07 budget, says DBCC

By Doris C. Dumlao and Vicente S. Labro,
Inquirer Visayas

THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET and Management (DBM) is set to propose the readjustment of state workers' salaries for the first time in over 10 years.

In Tacloban City, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said the DBM would file in Congress before the end of the year the proposed Salary Standardization Law III that will not only raise the salaries of government workers, but bring their wages closer to those of their counterparts in the private sector.

Once the SSL3 proposal has been filed, the proposed budget for 2007 will go up to about P1.137 trillion from P1.126 trillion.

According to Andaya, the total expenditure program for SSL3 over the next four years is expected to reach P100 billion.

Andaya was in the city to deliver a message marking the inauguration of the PS Depot and PX Mart located at the local DBM regional office.

A member of the government's interagency Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) described the proposal as part of a "growth-inducing" budget program for 2007.

"The last time the SSL was amended was 10 years ago," the source from DBCC said. "It's long overdue, so we're pushing for that."

Andaya said that the SSL3 would address the problems of low pay and disparity of salaries among the more than one million government workers.

Low salary, he said, is the reason why some teachers are now working in Hong Kong as domestic helpers, and why some government doctors are now nurses.

He disclosed that they made a "conservative study" comparing the salaries of people in a medium-scale private corporation with those in government.

GOV'T/B7

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▨ **RP tax effort** seen nearing pre-Asian crisis level /B2

REITs pose challenges for regulators

By Daxim L. Lucas

IF SOME INVESTMENT BANKERS HAVE their way, the Philippine capital market may soon be introduced to a financial instrument aimed at helping small investors profit from the nascent real estate boom, while giving property developers a fresh source of funding for their expensive—and risky—projects.

Called real estate investment trusts (REITs), the concept calls for issuers, like property firms, to sell securities to investors who want to profit from rising real estate prices, while retaining the flexibility to buy or sell their investments rapidly, unlike owning actual properties which can take time to liquidate.

On the part of developers, REITs present a new way of diversifying risk through new funding sources, other than the traditional methods of pre-selling or outright bank loans.

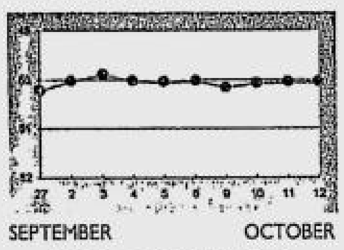
Once sold, the securities can be listed on the stock exchange where its price dynamics will be determined by the performance of the underlying real estate assets, like rental income, property value appreciation, and dividend yield, among others.

"The potential for this in the local market is huge," Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) president Francis Lim said in an interview on the

REITS/ B6

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.02 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 12, 2006

¥119.44 = $1

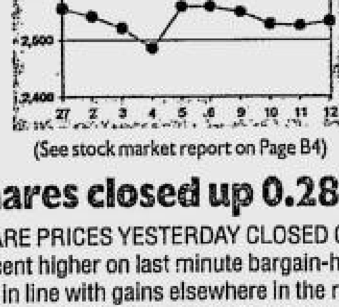
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 12, 2006

GOLD: **$576.00-576.50**

per ounce Hong Kong, Oct. 12, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



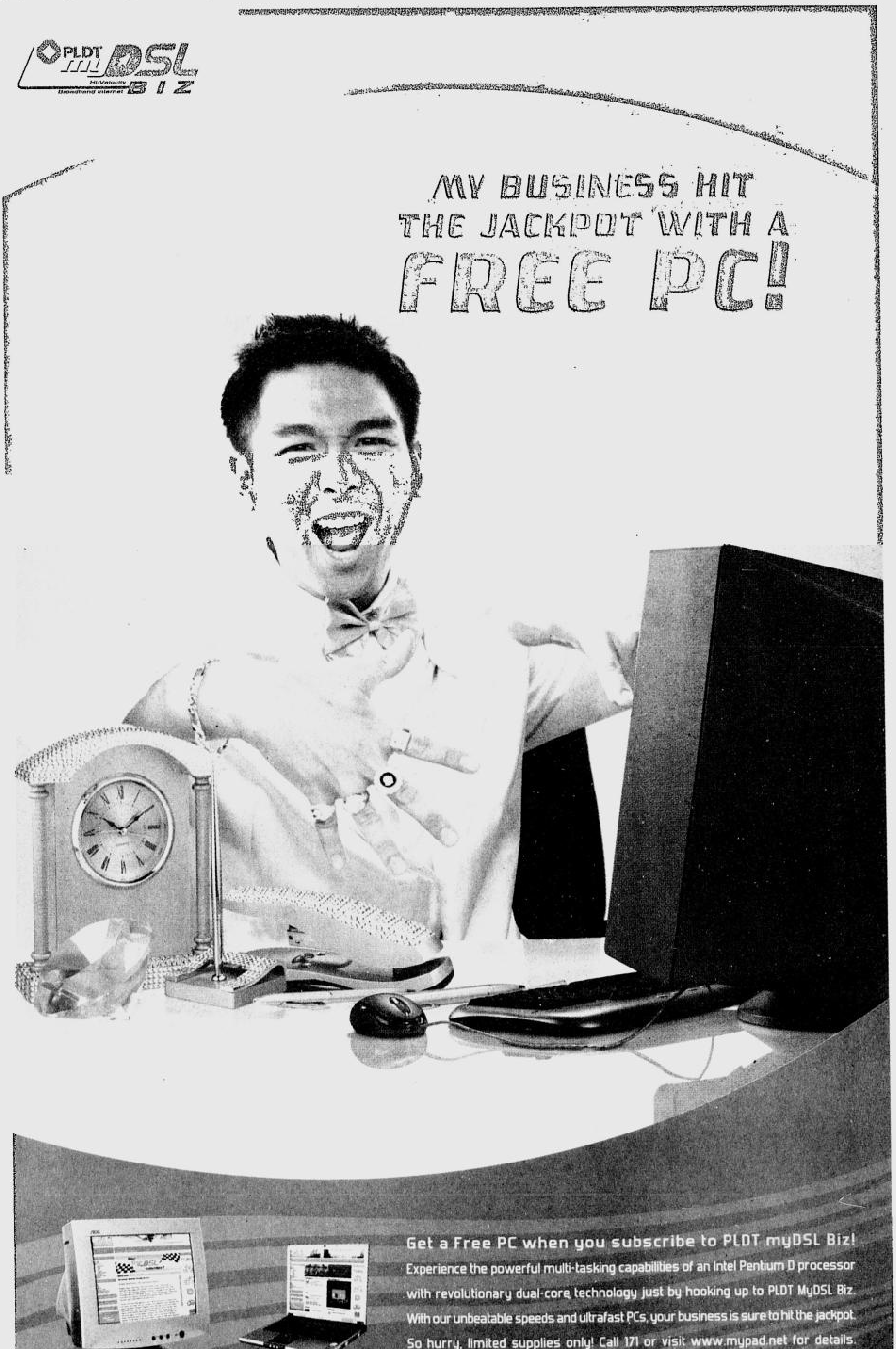
(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares closed up 0.28%

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.28 percent higher on last minute bargain-hunting, in line with gains elsewhere in the region on the back of falling oil prices, dealers said.

The composite index gained 7.13 points to 2,534.40 after moving between 2,520.46 and 2,540.82. The broader all-share index gained 3.56 points to 1,558.16.

Gainers led losers 59 to 41 with 49 unchanged. Turnover was 3.88 billion shares worth P2.43 billion ($48.60 million). *AFP*



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Package	Explorer	Entrepreneur	Enterprise	Empire
Upgraded Speed (up to)	2 Mbps	2.2 Mbps	2.7 Mbps	3 Mbps
Monthly Fees	P3,000	P4,000	P8,000	P14,500
FREE Products	Wireless Router	One (1) PC	Two (2) PCs	1 PC and 1 Laptop

RP tax effort seen nearing pre-Asian crisis level

Fiscal authorities expect key figure to hit 16.1% by 2008

By Michelle V. Remo

MEASURES TO IMPROVE TAX collection are expected to help pull up the Philippines' tax effort to near pre-Asian crisis levels, with fiscal authorities seeing it hitting 16.1 percent by 2008.

The country's tax effort is projected to reach 14.7 percent this year.

Tax effort measures a government's ability to translate economic growth into tax collection and is one of the economic indicators used to assess a country's creditworthiness.

It is computed as the ratio between the taxes collected by the bureaus of internal revenue and of customs, and the country's economic output as measured by the gross domestic product.

After hitting a record high of 17 percent in 1997, the Philippines' tax effort dropped consistently to 15.6 percent in 1998, 14.5 percent in 1999, 13.7 percent in 2000, 13.5 percent in 2001, 12.5 percent in 2002 and 2003, and 12.4 percent in 2004.

The country was able to arrest the declining trend in 2005, when it posted a tax effort of 12.7 percent.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said efforts to enhance efficiency of tax collection is geared toward recovering the tax effort posted before the Asian crisis took its toll on the Philippine economy.

"This (higher tax effort) will help us generate adequate resources to finance our infrastructure requirements," Teves said. The government's economic team has set a goal of increasing its spending for infrastructure-related projects from the current 3 percent of GDP to 5 percent over the medium term to attract more investors, he said.

The crisis, which started in 1997, adversely affected income of businesses across industries in Southeast Asia including the Philippines, therefore reducing governments' tax collection base.

The Department of Finance attributed last year's increase in tax effort to administrative measures to shore up tax collection.

These include the use of third-party sources, such as clients of large taxpayers, in determining the accuracy of the tax remittances of these companies.

Another measure is the adoption of the "industry benchmarking" method to determine accuracy of a firm's income declaration and tax remittances.

Under this method, the BIR comes up with a benchmark on income generation of firms in an industry and uses it to compare incomes declared and taxes paid by businesses belonging to the said industry.

The administrative measures are credited for the BIR's ability to post year-on-year growth in tax collection.

The revenue agency, however, is still on a struggle to meet its official tax collection target for this year, which is set at P675.4 billion.

This year's target is 24 percent higher than the P546.7-billion target for 2005.

While the BIR's ability to meet the target remains to be seen, revenue authorities are confident of easily surpassing last year's collection of P534.5 billion.

Fiscal authorities said that with the revenue-enhancement measures already in place, tax effort is expected to keep its upward trend until it reaches 16.1 percent in 2008 and recover the highest ever recorded 17 percent over the medium term.

The DOF projects that tax effort will further improve to 15.3 percent next year.

TUBA DAREDEVIL. Sans safety gear, tuba gatherer Ronnie Silaya does his daily morning routine of extracting juice from the treetops of coconuts that he processes into native wine. He sells the wine or tuba to tourists, earning him about P400 a day.
MELVIN GASCON/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

MADE IN CHINA

Cement manufacturing firms buck sale of 'smuggled' goods

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE CEMENT MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION of the Philippines has raised a howl over the continued sale of imported Chinese cement in some areas of Mindanao, saying these posed safety concerns for consumers.

In a letter to Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila dated Oct. 9, Cemap president Elmer M. Ordoñez said supplies from China of cement with the brand "Horse" were circulating in the cities of General Santos and Davao.

Ordoñez said Horse cement was "found to have failed meeting minimum standards for consumer safety."

"We have reported this illegal selling of (Horse cement in) September but I personally saw this being sold in a retail outlet in Davao City," he wrote.

Ordoñez said the Department of Trade and Industry's office in Davao had promised Cemap last week that charges would be filed against the importer.

He said the continued sale meant "customer safety has been endangered."

"The distribution of cement now covers a wider area since Horse cement is already being sold in General Santos City," the official added.

"Consequently, the extent of damage that it poses to property and life has grown much wider."

Because of the continued spread of the products, the Cemap chief said the importer should be penalized more severely.

He said samples of Horse cement had undergone 28-day strength and quality tests twice and failed.

The proponents of the product, however, had asked results to be invalidated because of "damaged samples."

Ordoñez said a request for a third test must be considered carefully and only after invalidation of previous tests' results was justifiable.

Aside from casting doubts on the quality of imported Chinese cement, Cemap has objected to the entry and sale of the products because these were allegedly landed at undervalued costs.

Last month, Cemap asked Sonia Cataumber-Brady, Philippine Ambassador to Beijing to bring to the attention of the Chinese government the "unfair practices" in the export of their cement to the Philippines.

Cemap cited documents which showed that the declared CIF (cost, insurance and freight) cost of the Chinese cargo was $30 a metric ton despite a Philippine Shipper's Bureau declaration that the freight of cement from China to the Philippines is $22 a ton," Ordoñez said.

Citing DTI data, Cemap said a $30-per-ton CIF would mean that the cost of the cement cargo itself cost only $8 a ton, which was way below the prevailing cement export price of $39 to $43 a ton.

Ordoñez, himself a former DTI undersecretary, said undervaluation at less than 25 percent of the estimated CIF value meant that the importers were depriving the government of much-needed tax revenues at a time when the country needed resources to fund vital social and economic expenditures.

"These undervalued imports that are sold at cheaper prices pose unfair competition to the domestic cement industry which pays billions of pesos in taxes annually," he said. "Worse, it threatens the livelihood of thousands of workers who depend on cement."

WATKINSON

HSBC names new CEO for RP

HSBC HAS ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTment of Mark Watkinson as new chief executive officer of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Limited in the Philippines and concurrently chair of HSBC Savings Bank (Philippines) Inc.

He will take over starting Jan. 1 next year from Warner Manning, who has been in the Philippines for four years, and who will be retiring from HSBC at the end of the year.

Watkinson joined HSBC in 1985 and has assumed various positions in corporate banking, retail operations and treasury in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America where he is currently the senior vice president and group head of Corporate Middle Markets for HSBC Bank USA.

He is a licensed attorney with a Law Degree from the University of Wales and a MBA from the University of Warwick.

Watkinson said: "I am excited to take on this role at a time when the bank in the Philippines has achieved record levels of growth, in both business performance and staff numbers. HSBC remains confident in the country's future prospects and I am keen to drive the momentum further and build on the success of the team in the Philippines."

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118i Sport	Sparkling Graphite	2005	9,170 kms	P1,850,000
118i Sport	Titanium Silver	2005	13,200 kms	P1,850,000
120i	Sparkling Graphite	2005	9,948 kms	P1,780,000

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MODEL	COLOR	YEAR	MILEAGE	PRICE
316i (E36)	Alpine White	1998	52,000 kms	P580,000
318i Limousine (E46)	Orient Blue	2003	49,000 kms	P1,280,000
318i Executive (E46)	Titanium Silver	2002	25,645 kms	P1,250,000
320i (E36)	Calypso Red	1997	47,048 kms	P600,000
320i Executive	Titanium Silver	2006	11,000 kms	P2,350,000
523i (E39)	Dunkel Blue	1997	82,169 kms	P950,000
523i Executive	Silver Grey	2006	3,650 kms	P4,230,000
530i Executive	Titanium Silver	2006	1,720 kms	P4,765,000
Z4 2.5i Roadster	Sterling Grey	2004	2,900 kms	P2,795,000
X3 2.5i SAV	Black Sapphire	2004	27,725 kms	P2,950,000
X3 2.5i SAV	Mystic Blue	2005	23,028 kms	P2,690,000
X5 3.0d	Oxford Green	2004	20,816 kms	P3,150,000
740i L	Oxford Green	1996	18,750 kms	P1,680,000

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Ayala's tech unit to invest $100M in thriving US, India BPO markets

LiveIt Solutions also acquired US provider Integreon for ₱900M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

NEWLY FORMED TECHNOLOGY INVESTment firm LiveIt Solutions Inc., a unit of conglomerate Ayala Corp., plans to invest roughly $100 million over the next five years in fast-growing business process outsourcing (BPO) markets in the United States, the Philippines and India.

BPOs refer to the growing trend of migrating an entire business function to either a second-owned or third-party service provider that offer low-cost services, according to an Internet website. Such services include accounting, human resources and legal and medical transcription.

LiveIt chief executive officer Alfredo Ayala yesterday also announced that the technology investment firm and its partners have jointly invested P900 million to wholly acquire a US BPO solutions provider Integreon Managed Solutions Inc. (IMSI).

The bulk of Integreon will be owned by LiveIt, although no details were disclosed due to a confidentiality agreement.

LiveIt and Integreon's management team also acquired existing shares of a group led by two US-based venture capital funds Connect-Capital and The View Group in IMSI.

Integreon is based in Los Angeles and has sales offices in London and New York. It operates two delivery centers in Mumbai and a third in New York.

The company will open a fourth center in New Delhi and will set up a fifth office in Metro Manila, with an initial 300 to 500 seats by the first quarter of next year. The location has yet to be identified.

Integreon has roughly 1,000 associates and serves most of the world's largest law firms, investment banks and top corporations.

Ayala said that LiveIt is focused on BPO companies that have well-developed customer relationships in the international markets, and the potential to bank on the Philippines' large pool of skilled professionals.

Last June, LiveIT bought an 11-percent stake in eTelecare Global Solutions Inc. for about P800 million. eTelecare is one of the top call center companies in Asia, with more than 7,000 employees in 12 call centers in the Philippines and the United States.

Its clients are in the telecommunications, electronics, financial and travel industries.

LiveIt is in the process of increasing its authorized capital to P2 billion from the present P500 million.

Metrobank sells off Steniel debt worth ₱380M

METROPOLITAN BANK AND TRUST CO. (Metrobank) has sold the debt of Steniel Manufacturing Corp. worth more than P380 million to a local group, according to banking sources.

Genesis Golingan, president of carton box producer Steniel Corp., declined to comment, saying he has yet to be advised on the transaction.

But the sources were quick to add that the transaction would not affect the company's rehabilitation plan since the deal merely involved the transfer of debt from one party to another.

Also, Chinatrust Commercial Bank Corp., another creditor of Steniel, told the Securities and Exchange Commission that it has received an offer from Steniel through Golingan to buy out Steniel's debts from Chinatrust at 35 percent of the loan value.

Sources in Chinatrust said the bank turned down the buyout proposal since it doubted the credibility of the offer.

Chinatrust also told the SEC that Steniel told the bank it had already dropped plans to seek a possible restructuring of its outstanding debts.

Steniel, in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, said it would still study an option whether or not to enter into court rehabilitation proceedings.

"The option to enter into rehabilitation is still a viable option for Steniel," the company said. "The offer made to Chinatrust was exploratory and, if accepted, would have been one of the factors that Steniel would have considered in deciding whether or not it would pursue rehabilitation proceedings through the courts."

Steniel further said that it has been making every effort to turn around the company's financial standing.

One of the options it is looking at is a possible buyout of existing debts at a discount from its creditors.

Steniel received shareholder approval last July to submit itself to court and undergo corporate rehabilitation should banks foreclose on its assets.

Steniel has P690 million in past due debts.

Golingan said that going to court is the company's "last option."

He added that the banks as well, consider foreclosure of the firm's assets as the last recourse after declaring Steniel in default of its debts early this year.

Golingan also said that Steniel's management believes it can turnaround the firm's operations over the next ten years. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 12, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	40	40.5	40	40.5	5,325,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57	57	56	56.5	2,295,100
China Banking Corp.	640	645	640	640	3,300
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	6,530,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	66.5	68	66.5	68	75,800
Philippine National Bank	33.5	33.5	33	33	21,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	21,900
Security Bank Corp.	53	54	53	54	53,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	44	46	44	46	6,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Atr Kimeng Fin. Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,000
Bankard Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	10,000
Citisecoline.Com Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.5	2,128,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30	30.5	30	30.5	32,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.12	1.18	1.1	1.14	3,004,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1985	1985	1985	1985	200
Ivantage Corp.	1.42	1.46	1.42	1.44	4,863,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	50.5	51	50.5	51	125,500
First Phil Hldgs Corp	51	52	51	52	1,083,200
Manila Electric Co. A	25	26.5	25	26	1,031,400
Manila Electric Co. B	32	33	32	32.5	1,406,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.2	9.2	9	9.1	1,987,000
Petron Corp.	4	4	3.95	4	4,630,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.3	90,000
Cadp Group Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	59,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.75	22.75	22.5	22.5	33,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	37	37.5	37	37.5	366,900
Pancake House Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	11,000
Rfm Corp.	0.91	0.92	0.9	0.9	1,780,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	248,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.25	0.31	0.25	0.3	630,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65.5	66	65	66	83,600
San Miguel Corp. B	75	75	73.5	74	263,800
Universal Robina Corp.	19.5	19.5	19	19	1,596,600
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	3,860,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	2.04	2.16	2.04	2.14	2,954,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	6,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	750,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.76	1.78	1.74	1.74	330,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	4.55	4.75	4.55	4.6	612,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	80,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	50,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.67	0.68	0.65	0.66	61,370,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	4,160,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	13,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	480	485	480	485	206,680
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.55	160,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	85,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	10,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.4	2.55	2.4	2.5	2,698,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.22	0.235	0.22	0.22	20,600,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	1,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	1,450,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3.05	3.1	3.05	3.1	60,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	12,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	17,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.42	1.5	1.42	1.48	36,619,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.2	4.2	1,916,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.65	2.75	708,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.28	1.38	1.28	1.36	1,169,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.2	1,105,000
Medco Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	150,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.58	1.58	7,562,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	2,000,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	120,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	41,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	620,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.13	8,630,000
SM Investments Corp.	255	255	252.5	252.5	597,400
South China Resources Inc	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	200,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.32	30,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	1,740,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.13	2,070,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.75	19,307,700
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.04	10,449,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.2	1.24	1,533,000
Cityland Development Corp	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.95	3	2.95	2.95	290,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.36	1.42	1.36	1.42	153,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	11,560,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.22	1.26	1.22	1.26	625,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	2,000,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.64	1.68	16,146,000
Gotesco Land, Inc.B	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	50,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,180,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.74	2,820,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.92	1.94	1.86	1.94	40,696,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	3.15	3.25	3.1	3.15	815,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.27	0.3	0.27	0.28	670,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	13	13	13	13	18,130,500
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,800,000
SM Development Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	936,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.4	14,648,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	10,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	18.25	18.75	18.25	18.75	257,200
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1	1	1	1	160,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Information Capital Tech.	6.2	7.5	6.2	7	2,509,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.44	1.52	1.44	1.5	27,534,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1080	1100	1080	1100	192,150
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.6	4.65	4,832,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2170	2190	2165	2175	72,560
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	400,000
Imperial Res	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	5,200,000
Ionics Inc.	2.04	2.06	2.04	2.06	205,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.055	0.06	0.055	0.06	11,700,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.32	1.2	1.3	290,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.033	0.03	0.033	2,963,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.9	3.95	3.9	3.9	220,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	42,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19	20	19	19.75	511,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.96	1.02	0.96	1	2,180,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	9,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesita Phils Hotel Corp.	5	5	5	5	796,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.96	2	1.96	2	1,557,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	500,000
Philippine Racing Club	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	9,900,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	15,000
Ipeople Inc	2.85	3.05	2.85	2.9	804,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2	2	1.96	1.96	298,000
Paxys Inc.	12	12	12	12	45,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.1	888,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	232,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	77,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7	474,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.6	1,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	3,410,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	4,020,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	32,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.023	59,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.01	202,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.45	3.5	6,411,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.25	18.5	233,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	50,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	79,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	5,500,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	90,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	40,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	135,000
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	104	104	103	103	7,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	18.25	19	18.25	18.5	631,600

CURRENCIES

October 12, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.798850	1.000000	50.0530
Japan	Yen	0.006674	0.008355	0.4182
United Kingdom	Pound	1.480907	1.853800	92.7883
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102516	0.128329	6.4233
Switzerland	Franc	0.627829	0.785916	39.3375
Canada	Dollar	0.702224	0.879044	43.9988
Singapore	Dollar	0.503054	0.629723	31.5195
Australia	Dollar	0.594736	0.744491	37.2640
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.120652	2.654632	132.8723
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.213004	0.266638	13.3460
Brunei	Dollar	0.501475	0.627746	31.4206
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000087	0.000109	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.021336	0.026709	1.3369
UAE	Dirham	0.217640	0.272442	13.6365
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.251800	62.6563
Argentina	Peso	0.257278	0.322061	16.1201
Brazil	Real	0.371213	0.464684	23.2588
Denmark	Kroner	0.134156	0.167937	8.4058
India	Rupee	0.017534	0.021949	1.0986
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216256	0.270709	13.5498
Mexico	New Peso	0.072655	0.090950	4.5523
New Zealand	Dollar	0.527468	0.660284	33.0492
Norway	Kroner	0.118742	0.148641	7.4399
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013175	0.016492	0.8255
South Africa	Rand	0.103801	0.129938	6.5038
Korea	Won	0.000834	0.001044	0.0523
Sweden	Kroner	0.108236	0.135490	6.7817
Syria	Pound	0.015389	0.019264	0.9642
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024001	0.030045	1.5038
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000372	0.000466	0.0233

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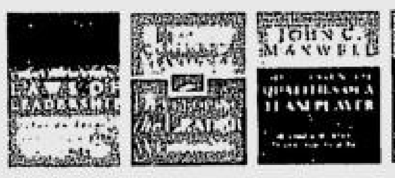

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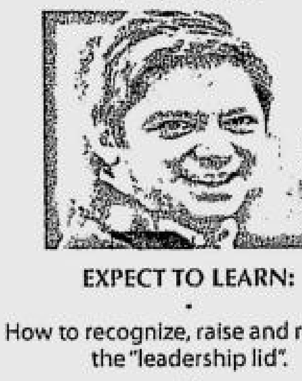

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Zamora gets nickeled and dimed

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

MINING MAGNATE MANUEL Zamora Jr. had to cancel a $180-million initial public offering in Toronto last week over poor pricing and lukewarm reception.

Zamora was offering to list 35.7 percent stake of his Philippine-based Nickel Asia Corp. at C$12-C$14 a share, but apparently, institutional investors, factoring in the so-called Philippine discount, want the issue priced at the C$10-level instead.

Given the steady nickel prices and booming demand in China, Zamora held fast with the original pricing and, rather than undersell the country's largest nickel mining company, thumbed down the reduced offer and flew posthaste to Manila with his red-faced investment bankers.

Operating since 1977, Nickel Asia owns six laterite mines in Palawan, Surigao, and Samar and exports all of its production to Australia, Japan, and, lately, to China.

Part of the IPO proceeds would have gone to double the capacity of a high-pressure acid leach nickel processing facility.

According to the grapevine, Zamora, brother of Erap Executive Secretary now San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, is presently contemplating either a private offering or, should investor sentiment improve, a London listing altogether.

Incidentally, one of Nickel Asia's directors happens to be ex-advertising man Gregorio Garcia, who was the main media consultant of Sen. Panfilo Lacson for his 2004 presidential bid.

Parsons get Grimm reminder

SUGAR AND MOLASSES heir Patrick Parsons and his three brothers have been ordered by the Supreme Court to return a Manila Golf share owned by a late partner of and left in trust to Parsons' late father.

In addition, the Parsons brothers are also being asked to pay the estate of Edward Miller Grimm P400,000 a year from September 1989 to November 1998, or P3.6 million, plus legal interest up to the present.

Grimm died in 1977, and his estate is now being represented by lawyer Ramon Quisumbing and Randy Gleave Lawyer.

The Parsons brothers became partners in G-P & Co.—the partnership established in 1952 by Grimm and Parsons' father, Charles—after Charles Parsons passed away in 1988.

The high court's Second Division rejected the Parsons' argument that Grimm's golf share—acquired by Grimm in 1960 and held in trust by the Parsons patriarch starting in 1964—had already been acquired by the partnership as evidenced by its payment of membership dues since 1992.

Although bearing the same name, the subsequent partnership formed in 1988 by the Parsons brothers Patrick, Michael, Peter and Jose was a different entity altogether, the high court ruled, from the partnership that had been dissolved with the death of Grimm in 1977.

Money-go-round

- MALAYSIA Airlines had an ad on Page A5 of the INQUIRER yesterday, advertising a $275 (slightly over P13,750) "supersaver" roundtrip fare from Manila to Kuala Lumpur.

On Page 12 of the same issue, Cebu Pacific was advertising a P3,998-roundtrip fare for the same route.

- ZOBEL in-law Francisco Jose "Patxi" Elizalde has reason to be in the dark as to the closure of the Greenbelt 1 branch of Burger King, as reported in this space on Wednesday.

Elizalde said his family's minority stake in the Burger King franchisee had been sold to his parents-in-laws' Ayala Corp. way back in 2003.

Incidentally, the dining and kitchen equipment of the Burger King branch are all being auctioned away today.

Heard through the grapevine

THE PROFESSIONAL animosity between broadcaster Korina Sanchez and ABS-CBN news chief Maria Ressa has gotten worse, with lawyers now being consulted because of a possible legal showdown.

(Email: cocktales@cocktales.biz)

SLC, Landco OK project

PROPERTY FIRMS SUCAT LAND Corp. (SLC) and Landco Pacific Corp. have agreed to develop SLC's 9.7-hectare property in Muntinlupa City into a residential lifestyle community.

The residential project involves the construction of multi-story condominium clusters.

SLC is a subsidiary of ATR Kim Eng Financial Corp. while Landco is a unit of Metro Pacific Investment Corp.

Under the terms of the joint venture agreement, SLC will contribute the property while Landco will chip in funds and expertise for its development.

The plan is to develop the property into a community of medium rise condos with various amenities, Renato Leveriza Jr., ATR Kim Eng Financial executive vice president, said. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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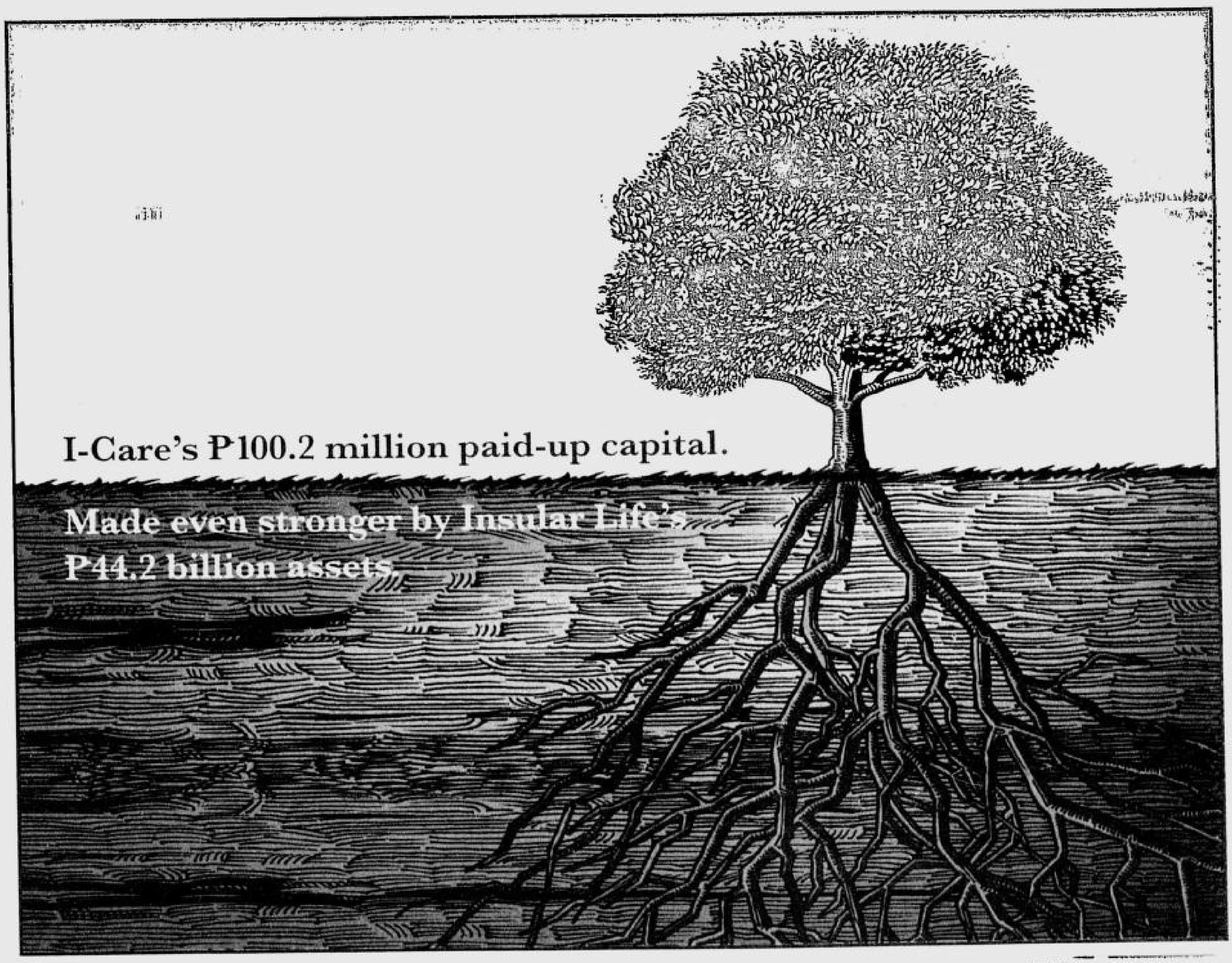
I-Care Celebrates 15 Years of Stability

Insular Life Health Care, Inc. (I-Care) celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. From its modest beginnings, it has grown to become one of the country's premier Health Maintenance Organizations providing its growing clientele with the best health care services possible.

A wholly-owned subsidiary of the Insular Life Assurance Company, Ltd., I-Care is one of the industry's more stable HMO's, providing comprehensive health care programs and services attuned to the needs of its members. To bring services closer to its clients, it maintains branch offices in key cities nationwide – in Cebu, Davao, Bacolod, Pampanga and Baguio. I-Care has a first-class, fully-equipped clinic located at the I-care Building in Makati City, and a mobile clinic as well. This enables it to provide personalized services to its corporate clients right at the client's doorsteps. To date, it has a network of over 5,731 medical and dental specialists and is accredited in more than 344 hospitals, clinics, and laboratories all over the country.

I-Care is a member of the Association of Health Maintenance Organizations of the Philippines, Inc. (AHMOPI), the trade organization of Health Maintenance Organizations in the Philippines.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RP-South Korea trade seen rising by 10% this year

Trade office expects reversal of 6.5-percent drop in 2005

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TWO-WAY TRADE BETWEEN THE PHILIPpines and South Korea is expected to grow by about 10 percent this year as first-semester transactions reached $2.9 billion, according to a South Korean official.

Hwang Hyeon-Gyu, deputy trade commissioner at the Korea Trade Center (Kotra) Manila, yesterday said this year's trade performance would be a turnaround from last year's 6.5-percent decline. He said last year's total trade between the two countries was about $5.9 billion

"Two-way trade has been unchanged in the past three years," Hwang said.

He said the value of shipments between South Korea and the Philippines from January to June showed an increase of about 20 percent.

"But trade activities vary with business seasons within a year," Hwang said adding that second semester trade might be lower than year-ago level but the decline would be offset by the first semester growth.

He said that most of the goods traded involved semi-conductors and electronics.

In the meantime, Kotra yesterday kicked off a nine-country roadshow for the launching of its B2B (business-to-business) e-Trade interactive Internet portal through a "cyber business meeting" between representatives of 14 South Korean companies and 23 Philippine firms.

South Korean traders represented are involved in the production of medical, household, construction and engineering supplies, machinery and automobile accessories.

During the launch held at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati City, Kotra Manila Trade Commissioner Sung Man Sohn said B2B e-Trade would make cross-border transactions faster and safer.

"Through this, business people can simultaneously check out information on Korean products through the monitor and discuss transactions and conditions through interpreters," Sung explained.

He added that another innovation of the portal was that once both sides agreed on a deal, the buyer could pay for a sample purchase with a credit card.

"In this case, the buyer can hold the payment until receipt of the sample product while the seller can be guaranteed of the payment from the bank (that issued the credit card)," Sung said.

The e-Trade roadshow runs up to Nov. 14, with similar cyber meetings to be held in Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Poland, Hungary and Belgium.

"This infrastructure is hoped to lessen (if not eliminate) trade misunderstandings and disputes through online and real time presentation of an electronic catalog for product and price," Sung said.

For yesterday's cyber meeting, Kotra Manila cooperated with the Philippine Internet Commerce Society and Innove Communications.

A husky venture that plays by the ear

CORPORATE CITIZEN

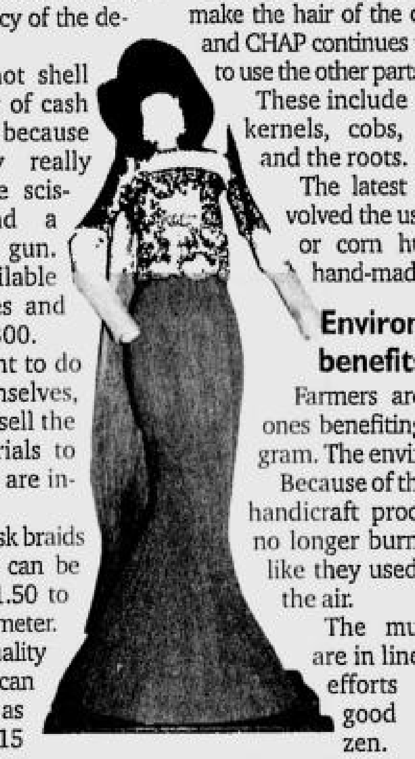
By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

FARMERS USUALLY BURN THE corn husk after harvest and just sell the ear.

But after going through a series of training under the Buhay, Pangkabuhayan at Mais project, spearheaded by hybrid corn seed producer Pioneer Hi-Bred Philippines, corn farmers realized they could increase their income by fashioning handicraft out of the versatile corn husk.

The husk is the tough outer skin of the corn ear that farmers burn or throw as garbage after harvest. To make handicrafts, these are collected and dried under the sun. Clear lacquer gloss is then applied to give them a glossy finish.

Finished corn husk products include bags, hats, coasters, angels, slippers, mats, Christmas decors, office organizers, wedding and corporate giveaways, and home accents such as artificial flowers.



AN IMELDA Marcos-inspired ornament (right) and a Christmas ball made of corn husk.

Additional income

From 2004 to date, Pioneer Hi-Bred, a member of the DuPont group, has trained over 20,000 corn farmers and their families in partnership with the Corn Husk Association of the Philippines.

Many are already reaping their just rewards.

"Mothers who work on their corn husk projects now have more money to pay their electric bills, meet tuition fees and put food on the table," said CHAP president and founder Rue Rivera-Ramas.

According to Ramas, the training runs for just two hours and yet the corn farmers leave the seminar room ready and inspired to make their own products.

From a capital of just P50 for raw materials, a crafter will be able to sell P1,000 worth of crafts or more depending on the intricacy of the design.

They also need not shell out a lot of cash for tools because all they really need are scissors and a glue gun. Both are readily available in department stores and they cost less than P300.

If they do not want to do the handicraft themselves, the farmers can just sell the raw materials to those who are into it.

Corn husk braids and twine can be sold for P1.50 to P3 a meter. Good quality corn husk can be sold for as much as P15 a kilo.

Ramas said farmers could earn the equivalent of the daily minimum wage from crafting.

Pioneer said in a statement that many of those engaged in crafting prefer husks from Bt corn varieties because they do not have holes caused by Asiatic corn borers, the bane of corn farmers.

Pioneer Hi-Bred is the country's leading producer and distributor of hybrid seed corn. Established in the country in 1976, Pioneer is first company to introduce hybrid corn here.

It is wholly owned by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., a DuPont unit, and the world's leading agricultural genetics company headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa, United States.

Corn husks of the hybrid variety sell for as much as P30 a kilo. Long corn stalks, on the other hand, are bought for P1 a piece and are used as décor accessories. Even corn silk can be sold at P50 a kilo.

Ramas said the corn silk was used to make the hair of the corn husk dolls, and CHAP continues to look for ways to use the other parts of the corn.

These include the tassel, silk, kernels, cobs, stalks, leaves and the roots.

The latest experiment involved the use of corn leaves or corn husk in making hand-made paper.

Environmental benefits

Farmers are not the only ones benefiting from the program. The environment is, too.

Because of the demand from handicraft producers, farmers no longer burn the corn husk like they used to and pollute the air.

The multiple benefits are in line with Pioneer's efforts to become a good corporate citizen.

"The project is rooted on Pioneer's mission of helping Filipino corn farmers, not only by providing them access to the best corn seed technology, but also in helping them augment their family income through community development programs," Pioneer country manager Jet Parma said in a statement.

The project started in General Santos in Mindanao and has spread to Luzon.

In 2005, BPM was awarded the DuPont Sustainable Growth Award, an annual recognition of deserving projects from around the world that are consistent with efforts to make DuPont a more sustainable corporation.

Ramas says it is CHAP's dream to get all corn farmers around the Philippines involved in handicrafts.

They not only earn more, they also get to do their part to fight pollution and environmental degradation.

Political will necessary for survival

COMMENTARY

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

THERE IS GOOD NEWS AND bad news. The good news is that there are congressmen like Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada III who act decisively on the needs of farmers and fisherfolk. The bad news is that there is a lack of political will to follow through on necessary measures for farmers' and fisherfolk's survival. Two examples follow.

Anti-smuggling

In addition to endangering livelihood through smuggled goods, that may even carry dangerous diseases such as Avian Flu and foot and mouth disease, smuggling deprives our government of much needed revenues. The United Nations website shows there is about a $10 billion difference between the amount other countries report they export to us and the amount the Bureau of Customs reports as our imports. At a 10-percent VAT and an assumed average tariff of 6 percent, this amounts to P80 billion loss in tax revenue.

The Tañada-sponsored Anti-Smuggling Act of 2005 was passed by the House of Representatives one year and four month ago. This was the result of the advocacy by groups such as the Federation of Philippine Industries, the Fair Trade Alliance, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Alyansa Agrikultura. However, we discovered that this bill is scheduled for Senate deliberation only after a contentious time-consuming bill on fiscal incentives is decided upon.

If one quantifies and compares the monetary and livelihood impact of the anti-smuggling bill versus the incentives bill, the former has greater significance. Political will in the Senate must be harnessed to address the most important priorities.

Executive branch

Political will is also needed in the executive branch. Many provisions in the anti-smuggling bill are not necessary if the executive branch does its job properly. An example is the bill's feature on the submission of copies of the Inward Forward Manifest (IFM).

The IFM is a list of all imported products that BOC receives. The advantage of knowing this is that banned or smuggled goods are identified prior to arrival so that they can be stopped before they enter Philippine territory.

Before the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Anti-Smuggling was abolished two years ago, Customs provided this list to a government unit. But since that government unit was also abolished, only the BOC has that list today. Therefore, there is no check and balance on what the BOC can do with it.

A dramatic example was when the congressional committee had to subpoena the IFM of onion imports. Certain importation did not have the required import permits, but were not apprehended for smuggling. If another government unit had this list, the smuggling would have been stopped.

The Alyansa Agrikultura wants at least the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry to be provided with the list to ensure the necessary check and balance mechanism, but there has been a lack of political will to make this happen. Thus, the Alyansa recommended that this be made a feature of the Anti-Smuggling Bill. In an effective functioning democracy, this move should immediately be taken by the executive branch without requiring a legislative measure.

Albert Lim, president of the National Federation of Hog Farmers and the Alyansa vice-president for Luzon, says: "We are alarmed by the recent widespread smuggling of hogs from China. They not only kill our farmers' livelihood with their extremely low prices; they may also be carrying the dreaded foot and mouth disease. We should demand the reactivation of the Cocas, where the Alyansa was always represented, and the IFM availability to DA and DTI. This was so effective that the smuggling rate of containerized imports in Metro Manila decreased from 40 percent to 1 percent."

Trade representative office

Last Oct. 11, Tañada met farmers and fisherfolk leaders to discuss another bill he was sponsoring: the creation of a Philippine Trade Representative Office (PTRO).

Sen. Mar Roxas, a former trade secretary, is sponsoring the same bill in the Senate. Speaking from his own experience, Roxas said the PTRO would pave the way for "a more institutionalized approach".

At present, separate agencies deal with trade negotiations in both multilateral and bilateral levels with the trade secretary as the lead negotiator. At the Oct. 11 meeting, the farmer and fisherfolk leaders unanimously agreed with Tanada that a full time Philippine Trade Representative with Cabinet rank was necessary at this time. This is because crucial international trade negotiations are being conducted affecting their very survival. However, there appears again to be a lack of political will to fast track this bill's passage.

Conclusion

Political will is needed in both Congress and the executive branch. But if there are uncontrollable delays in the congressional process, we believe that the executive branch has the power to improve many of our existing mechanisms without resorting to legislation, as in the IFM example. It is hoped that more political will will be exhibited in the near future. Otherwise, the suffering of the farmers and fisherfolk may transform into something of greater danger to our nation.

(*The author is Agriwatch chair. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8522112*)

Metrobank raising capital by ₱6.6B

By Doris C. Dumlao

METROPOLITAN BANK AND TRUST CO., THE country's biggest bank, will raise its core capital by about P6.6 billion through the offering of new primary shares to the international and domestic markets.

Metrobank's global equity offering of 173.6 million in new shares, representing 95 percent of the total planned issuance, was oversubscribed overnight when it was launched on Oct. 11 at P38 per share, the bank yesterday said in a press statement. The remaining 5 percent will be offered to local investors on Oct. 16.

The transaction was the first ever primary global offering completed overnight by a Philippine company.

The offer price of P38 per share represented a 6.98-percent discount to the P40.85 per share weighted average price of the bank's shares for 10 trading days ending Oct. 10.

The international offer was about four times oversubscribed, generating total interest of about $500 million from 45 international investors—even as the issuance coincided with the $19-billion global initial public offering of International Commercial Bank of China, the world's biggest IPO so far, which was also set for this week.

"We are happy with the outcome of this offering. We feel it reflects the growing foreign interest in both the Philippines and in Metrobank," said Metrobank president Arthur Ty.

REITs pose challenges for regulators

From page B1

sidelines of last week's First Philippine REIT Forum in Makati City.

He explained that REITs—long a feature of more advanced capital markets around the region—have the potential to unlock the country's large real estate market potential for both developers and investors alike.

There are an estimated $400 billion worth of REITs being traded around the world at present, about $50 billion of which are in Asian markets.

"That's why many people are excited about it, especially the large [property] developers who are the ones leading the efforts [to introduce the scheme]," Lim said.

But is the Philippines' underdeveloped capital market and often poorly educated investor base ready for yet another financial instrument that promises better returns and, more importantly, higher risk as well?

This early, government regulators are already looking at the potential pitfalls that selling and investing in real estate-linked securities can bring, given the investment community's long love-hate relationship with the real estate market.

"I think it will be very important to inform potential investors of the risks involved here," Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) chairperson Fe B. Barin said in an interview. "The key will be transparency in investor education."

Her statements are stereotypical of a regulator who has spent a career inside government offices, and is already being branded as a "killjoy" by some of the more visionary members of the investment banking fraternity.

But Barin knows whence she speaks of, having spent the bulk of her career at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) where she was privy to the most delicate dilemmas of the policy-making Monetary Board.

She admits she is worried by the local investment community's relatively poor track record when it comes to making bets on the famously fickle real estate market.

This is especially true since much of the troubles that caused banks to collapse or seek emergency assistance from regulators in recent times were due to poor investment decisions in the real estate market—many of them suddenly finding themselves short on cash and long on illiquid real estate assets after big bets turned sour.

Also fresh on Barin's mind is the unit investment trust funds (UITF) crisis of last summer. Many banks and their clients blamed the crisis, in part, on poor investor education.

In that event, a sharp drop in the value of government bonds led to a massive sell-off, as clients—many claiming to be unaware that their principal investments were actually at risk—rushed for the exits in a "mini-run," according to the BSP.

"In the case of UITFs, and I've experienced this myself, many bank personnel never informed the clients of the full risks involved," Barin said, fearing the same will happen if REITs are introduced in the local market prematurely.

"All the salespeople will tell you is that you should put your money here because it [offers] better [yield] than a bank deposit," she said.

Because most REITs are listed on the stock exchange, investors may lose money on them if market prices decline, even if the REITs underlying assets remain sound.

At the same time, opaque practices in the local business community may make it difficult for REIT owners to monitor whether their funds are being used properly by property developers.

Finally, trustees who manage the REITs' funds may not always make the best investment decisions, as evidenced by the poor real estate track record of trust officers in the banking community.

The SEC chair's reservations are overwhelmed, however, by the optimism of investment bankers who are excited by the prospect of a new business line that may rake in millions of dollars abroad.

First Metro Investment Corp. vice president Roberto Juanchito T. Dispo believes the time is right for REITs to be introduced in the Philippines.

"The technology is already there," he said. "We have the expertise to make this work."

So far, the only roadblock to the development of the REIT market locally are onerous tax laws which make it expensive for a property developer, like Ayala Land Inc. or SM Prime Holdings, to transfer its assets to a REIT vehicle, and transaction taxes, which make the regular purchase and sale of these instruments prohibitive.

Proponents are now lobbying Senate banking committee chair Edgardo Angara to push for amendments to the laws to make them friendlier to the proposed scheme.

Even REITs boosters recognize, however, that unsophisticated local investors have to be prepared further if another UITF fiasco is to be avoided.

"We have to do it in stages," PSE's Lim said, when asked about the suitability of a complicated financial product for local investors. "They will have to be educated on this first." •

Investor education, he said, will determine whether REITs will truly take hold in the Philippines or if it will fall by the wayside, the way other fancy investment ideas have in the past.

Milenyo spawns phone charging business

By Gina Rodriguez
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—TRUST THE Pinoy entrepreneur to find opportunities even in the most trying times.

This was illustrated in the birth of the cellular phone charging business here right after typhoon Milenyo ravaged Bicol.

Gina Echaluce, officer-in-charge of Globalink Moscom Legazpi, said the computer shop located at the fourth floor of the LCC Mall, realized an additional income of at least P1,000 a day from charging cellular phones.

There was no Internet connection but it was business as usual at Globalink with its UPS (uninterrupted power supply) powered by the generator set of the mall.

Clients managed to encode, print and fax documents courtesy of the Digitel phone lines as Bayantel, its provider, resumed service only last week.

Echaluce said the computer shop earned P800 to at least P1,000 when the "side business" was charging all models and makes of handsets.

After two to three hours of strolling within the confines of the mall decked with the yuletide season's finery, the customer, with a claim stub as proof, could have his handset fully charged, all for a fee of P20.

Mom-and-pop establishments, such as a mineral bottled water outlet on Aguinaldo St. and a large book store located in Peñaranda St., got on the act and offered to charge cell phones for P15 a handset.

As there were no storm signals despite news of the typhoon named Neneng, some schools in the city had reopened, which provided a bigger market for these downtown establishments.

Binga dam sale reset, legal, tax kinks cited

BAGUIO CITY—THE TAX LIABILITIES of the National Power Corp. in Benguet and a pending court case have prompted the government to reset its sale of the aging 100-megawatt Binga hydroelectric dam.

The Binga dam and the 75-MW Ambuklao hydroelectric plant are part of the Napocor assets to be auctioned off this year, but the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) has again moved the sale to next year.

Rene Rivera, Napocor manager for upper Agno River projects, said the state power firm was coordinating with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources because part of the property Napocor intended to sell along with the dams are forest lands occupied by Ibalois.

Napocor assets include the pine canopy that serves as a watershed for these power plants.

Napocor also needs to settle real estate debts amounting to over P113 million before the property can be auctioned off.

Catalino Tan, the contractor whose rehabilitation contract at Binga dam was recently terminated, has also sued Napocor for unpaid fees before a Baguio regional trial court.

Tan wants Napocor president Cyril del Callar to proceed with a $5-million settlement his predecessors drew up with him to give Binga a clean legal slate.

Rivera could not say whether the legal encumbrance coming from Tan's case had prevented Binga's sale, but Napocor "hopes it would be settled by 2007."

Rivera said Napocor has not released any new budget to upgrade the two old power plants, despite the fact that their resale value may have plunged due to the decaying equipment.

He said Napocor maintains Binga plant's machinery to ensure that it continues to service its single biggest client, the Texas Instruments Philippines Inc., at the Baguio Economic Zone. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Cocodiesel industry damaged by typhoon

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—TYPHOON "Milenyo" wrought havoc on the coco biodiesel industry.

The Department of Agriculture said 24 million coconut trees were destroyed by the typhoon.

Chris Michelena, main convenor of the Philippine Biodiesel Association (PBA), said this number represented almost 30 to 40 percent of the coconut trees in Southern Luzon.

He said this constituted almost 5 percent of the coco biodiesel exports.

"We should support the price of copra to help farmers renew and revive their produce," he said, "If the coconut is harmed, it would take a year for it to recover."

He said copra was selling at P15 a kilo before the typhoon, down from P23 a kilo last year. He said the lack of coconuts caused by Milenyo would raise the price of copra to P18 a kilo.

Sales of cocodiesel are expected to go up with the passage of the biofuels bill.

The biofuels law approved the other day requires that a minimum of 1 percent cocomethyl ester or cocobiodiesel and 5 percent of ethanol shall be blended into all diesel (for CME) and gasoline (for ethanol).

Gov't set ...

From page B1

"We found out that as the rank goes higher, the disparity (in salary scale) between the government and that of the private sector becomes bigger," he said in Flipino. "You actually see the difference from Salary Grade 10 going up."

"The higher the educational attainment, the more you are punished," Andaya said, apparently referring to teachers, doctors and other professionals who receive salaries much lower than their counterparts in the private sector.

"We will now try to move toward (solving the problem), to increase the salary (of state workers) using the private sector as a benchmark."

In the proposed 2007 budget, with the SSL3 taken into account, the biggest allocation will go to social services amounting to P332.9 billion or 29.6 percent of the total budget, according to DBCC documents.

Debt servicing will still corner a sizeable share of 29.1 percent amounting to P327.3 billion.

On the other hand, general public services will account for P178.6 billion or 15.9 percent of the budget, while defense will have a P53.9-billion allotment or 4.8 percent of the budget.

Compared to the 2006 level, the debt servicing burden in 2007 will go down by 6 percent, while the budgets for economic services, social services, defense and general public services will go up by 18.7 percent, 12.2 percent, 2.3 percent and 12.5 percent, respectively.

In short, there will be an increase in all expense classes, except for debt servicing.

In terms of priority allocations, the government next year will spend more for infrastructure, educational programs, health and social services, science and technology, and pension.

Overall, the government next year will allot P356.8 billion for personal services, P150.8 billion for maintenance and other operating expenses, P116.6 billion for capital outlays, P183.9 billion and P318.2 billion for interest payments.

The government's proposed spending is in line with the targeted growth in Philippine gross domestic product of 5.7-6.5 percent for 2007, up from the projected range of 5.5-6.1 percent for this year.

Farmers urged to go organic

Alternative practice more profitable, Searice study says

By Christine A. Gaylican

SUBSISTENT FARMERS OF BOHOL AND North Cotabato, who cannot afford to buy expensive seeds for propagation, have opted to make their own rice varieties in their backyards.

With no or limited resources to buy expensive hybrid rice seeds that require pesticides and fertilizers, farmers from Visayas and Mindanao are making the most of the traditional rice varieties that they just used to keep in their barns.

By cross breeding native rice varieties with modern rice strains made available by nongovernment organizations, farmer Armando Cataolico has made three organic rice varieties that produce 160 cavans of rice a cropping season in his two-hectare plot.

Catolico said in a briefing yesterday that his varieties are pest-resistant and high-yielding.

"This is the alternative we choose to offer our fellow farmers, a viable option to costly hybrid rice seeds," said Catolico in Filipino. "It is even very suited to our environment."

Ka Armando, 47 years old, shared that he has made aromatic rice varieties he calls JACS 4, 5 and 6.

Reusing rice seeds and banking them for future use has been discouraged by the hybrid rice scheme supported by the Department of Agriculture.

The high yields for hybrid seeds is premised on the use of new seeds every planting season.

However, this has been very costly for farmers as every 200-kilogram bag of hybrid rice seeds costs P2,500.

"The DA would subsidize half of the said price but there are other requirements such as fertilizers and pesticides. Production costs are estimated to be P14,000 to P15,000," said farmer Ruperta Mangaya-ay in Filipino.

She said that the rice varieties made by the farmers are better because aside from being the healthier alternative, cost of production is lower at P5,000 to P6,000.

In Bilar, Bohol, where Aling Ruperta came from, farmers use madre de cacao and tanglad (lemon grass) mixed with water to make an effective herbal pesticide.

For fertilizers, the Bilar farmers apply chicken dung and burned rice hulls.

The good agricultural practices practiced by Catolico and Mangaya-ay are shared with other farmers in Bukidnon, Sultan Kudarat with the assistance of Southeast Asian Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (Searice) and the Farmers Consultative Council (FCC).

The shift of these farmers to planting organic rice 11 years ago resulted in the increase of both yields and income, Searice's policy officer Stephanie Jallorina said.

She said that based on the study conducted by Searice, organic farmers earned P10,400 compared to the P6,600 when they were dependent on inorganic means of farming.

This is partly due to the high price that organic products command in the market.

Drop in sugar prices alarms producers

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—ALARMED OVER a drop in the mill gate prices of sugar, sugar industry leaders urged government to implement measures to avert a downtrend.

The mill gate sugar prices declined from about P1,100 a 60-kilogram bag at the start of the milling season to a low of P930.

Reynaldo Bantug of the Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations said the sudden drop in domestic sugar prices last week "was alarming and unexpected."

The Sugar Alliance in a meeting last Wednesday passed a resolution recommending to the SRA a quedan system that would ensure orderly marketing of sugar, National Federation of Sugarcane Planters president Enrique Rojas said.

The group asked that 10 percent of sugar production for year 2006-2007 be allocated as follows: 70 percent for class B (domestic market) and 10 percent each for class A (United States quota), C (reserve) and D (world market), Rojas said.

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Bond Fund - Peso	1.52216	1.51258
Managed Fund - Peso	1.68678	1.67813
Growth Fund - Peso	1.38084	1.36601
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3105	1.3029

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

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	Oct. 9, 2006	Oct. 2, 2006
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Balanced Fund	1.224594	1.214035
Equity Fund	1.264337	1.245197

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The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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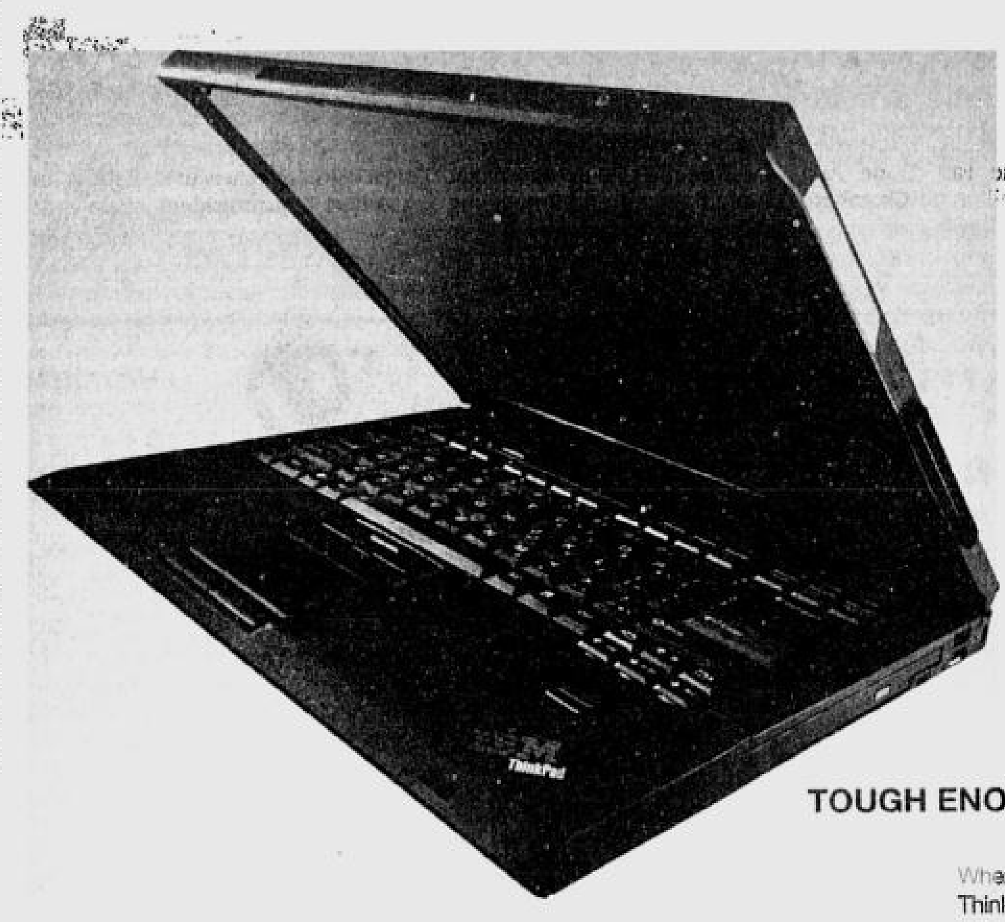

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EUROPCAR SETS UP IN RP

Europcar, one of the leading car rental companies, has set up a branch in the Philippines, partnering with Infinity Rent-A-Car. Shown is Doug Hunt, Europcar CEO and Ma. Socorro Clavano, president of MSIC Transportation Inc sealing their partnership with a handshake at their contract signing ceremony held Sept. 8 at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila.

WISE learning confab

SCHOOL LEADERS, OWNERS AND ADMINISTRATORS nationwide are invited to the Wise Learning Conference and advocacy meeting to be mounted by the Center for Learning and Teaching Styles (CLTS) from Oct. 15 to 17 at the AIM Conference Center, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. CLTS president Henry Tenedero said WISE, (Winning Ideas and Strategies in Education), will have distinguished speakers providing participants, educators and practitioners the opportunity to exchange ideas, knowledge and concerns about enabling life-long learning. CLTS is a member of the International Learning Styles Network of St. John's University in New York. This conference focuses on the possibilities for enabling life-long learning within the diverse fields of marketing, social development, leadership and management, finance, entrepreneurship and continuing education. For details, call (074) 446-9866 in Baguio or e-mail ilsc06@yahoo.com.ph or cltsphils@gmail.com.

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Schedule of Activities

Issuance of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Documents	October 11- 16, 2006
Pre-Bidding Conference at Insurance Commission, 1071 Inscom Building, United Nations Avenue, Manila	October 16 at 9:30 a.m.
Submission and Opening of Eligibility, Technical and Financial Envelopes at Insurance Commission	October 30, 2006 at 9:30 a.m

Interested suppliers may request detailed project description and budget per lot from the BAC Secretariat, **Ms. Rosalyn Tañagras** (Phone No. 848-0277) starting on October 11, 2006.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Requirements/Check, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A).

The Insurance Commission and DBP Data Center, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and award to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to the Insurance Commission.

(Sgd.) PAMELA F. PITAS
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – October 6 & 13, 2006)

SERIOUSLY JOKING

STCM'S "SERIOUSLY JOKING' WITH REX NAVARRETE

St. Theresa's College Manila High School batch '72 co-sponsors a comedy night titled 'Sersiously Joking' featuring Rex Navarrete Oct. 20 at 8 p.m., Cinema 10 SM MegaMall. Part of the proceeds of this event will go to the various outreach programs the St. Theresa's Alumni Association of Manila supports. Girlie Rodis, an alumnus of STCM, spearheads this event along with her batch. For tickets, call Anna Torres at 656-5770 or text 0920-9265949 or 0917-8992299.

Bits & Clips

Neurocritical Care Summit begins

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS, DEPARTMENT OF Neurology and Psychiatry, together with the Santo Tomas Neuroscience Alumni Association Inc, will be hosting the Neurocritical Care Summit on Oct. 13 and 14 at the Angelo King Auditorium of the Benavides Cancer Institute, UST Hospital. This two-day critical care will focus on current concepts and applications of skills in the setting of critical care neurologic disorders. Foreign experts like Professor Stefan Schwab (University of Erlangen and Heidelberg), Dr. Axel Rosengart (University of Chicago) and Dr. Soh Chai Rick (Singapore General Hospital, NNI) will be gracing this second offering of the department's Neuroscience Initiative.

Chrysler goes MAD!

MAKE A DEAL OF A LIFETIME AS CATS MOTORS INC HOLDS the very first "Chrysler MAD Rush Weekend" scheduled from Oct. 13 to 15 at both Chrysler Makati along Pasong Tamo and at Chrysler Greenhills. The latest models of Chrysler, Jeep and Dodge will be on display where you can avail yourself of possibly the industry's best financing deals and packages only made available during the "Chrysler Mad Rush Weekend." Get amazing deals! For as low as a P99,000 downpayment, you can already get a Dodge Durango, a Town & Country, a 300C or even the all-new Pacifica. You can also just drive up, trade-in and drive off in the latest Chrysler, Jeep or Dodge car of your dreams! So, call Chrysler Makati at 815-2222 or Chrysler Greenhills at 723-5808 and let's all get MAD!

CEO Excel Awards deadline reset

THE CEO EXCEL (COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE IN ORGAnizations) Awards deadline for nominations has been reset to the evening of Oct 16, in view of appeals from nominators to consider the delays caused by the recent typhoon. In extending the deadline, the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippines also gained time to enrich the awards program on Nov. 8 with a Social Media Forum on the latest technologies and strategies, online tools and platforms that people use to share opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with each other. The Forum will be held at 4 p.m. to precede the Awards cocktails at 6 p.m. at the Forum-Philippine International Convention Center (PICC). The awards ceremonies will follow at 7 p.m., and a formal dinner will cap the proceedings. For more information, call the IABC secretariat at 750-5667, 751-3205 and 750-1481.

Ellinwood Malate Church turns 99

THE UCCP-ELLINWOOD MALATE CHURCH MARKS ITS 99TH founding anniversary in simple but meaningful celebrations on Oct. 15 with the theme "Dedicating to God an Empowered Church." The highlight of the event is the Divine Thanksgiving Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. where the Church's six worshipping congregations will converge. Preachers will be Elder Angel Aguilar Sr and youth leader Mikas Inocencio symbolizing the different generations of worshippers dedicated to the service of the Almighty God. Afterwards, there will be a potluck fellowship lunch and special variety show directed by Vera Acosta. Other activities in the month-long celebration include a musical acoustic night and fireworks display on Oct. 14. This year's anniversary committee is headed by couple Bong and Alitte Santero. Ellinwood Malate Church is at 1660 Dr. A. Vasquez Street, Pedro Gil Street, Malate, Manila. For inquiries, call 523-2884 or 523-6564.

UST-Engineering Centennial Awardees

THE FACULTY OF Engineering of the University of Santo Tomas is inviting nominations to the UST Engineering Centennial Awards. 100 awardees shall be selected from among the officials, faculty, non-academic staff, students, and alumni of the UST Faculty of Engineering on the occasion of its 100th founding anniversary in 2007. Nominees must have distinguished themselves in any of the following areas: Service to the UST Faculty of Engineering, Engineering Education, Industry Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Engineering Design, Research, Government Service, and Community Service. Student nominees will also be considered in the areas of academic excellence, leadership, distinction in national or international competitions, and community involvement. The implementing guidelines and the nomination form may be downloaded from the UST website at www.ust.edu.ph. For submission of nomination details, call 731-4041. The nomination forms and all supporting documents must have been received at the Office of the Dean by Oct. 15.

Republic of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay City

INVITATION TO BID

The Senate of the Philippines invites all G-EPS registered bidders/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid on the following:

DESCRIPTION	QTY.	PROJECT ALLOCATION	NON-REFUNDABLE FEE
1. a) DESKTOP COMPUTERS – U.S. brand, Intel Pentium 4, 3.0GHz with Hyper threading, 512MB RAM, 1.44MB FDD, CD-ROM Drive, 80GB HDD, 10/100Mbps Network Interface Card on-board, 17" SVGA Monitor, keyboard & mouse, MS Windows XP Professional (OEM w/ individual CD), 3 yrs. Warranty on parts & one (1) yr. on labor	44 units	Php 2,432,000.00	Php 500.00
b) MONO LASER PRINTER – 2MB memory, at least 600x600 dpi, up to 15 pages per Minute, USB I/O port	8 units		
c) DOT MATRIX PRINTER – Latest 18 Pin (9x2 Staggered), 136 cols., handles up to 5 part forms (1 orig. – 4cps.), High speed-up to 476 characters per second (10 cpi), Flexible paper paths (front, rear & bottom), interface choices of both Parallel & USB	4 units		
d) NETWORK PRINTER – up to 1,200 dpi, print speed up to 30 pages per minute, 32MB Memory, USB 2.0 & parallel interface, 10/100 network port	1 unit		
2. a) REPAIR OF CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT (CPU) OF NEC-NEAX 7400 as per Scope Of Work – (a) Check-up of CPU of NEAX 7400 to determine extent of Repair, (b) replace the following card: PR-GTOO-A (gate card); PR-GT01-A (extended gate card or hard disk controller); install & test the unit; clean existing redundant CPU	LOT	Php 462,500.00	Php 300.00
b) PA-10 24 Card (Input-Output Controller Card)	1 pc.		
3. SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATERIALS FOR THE PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF DILAPIDATED ROOFING & GUTTER AT GROUND FLOOR, SENATE BUILDING	LOT	Php 365,500.00	Php 200.00

The bidding documents shall be available to interested bidders/suppliers at the BAC Secretariat Office, Rm. 401, 4/F Senate of the Philippines. GSIS Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City from **1:30 PM to 6:00 PM, October 12, 16-19 & 24, 2006** upon payment of non-refundable fee as indicated above. **Interested bidders will be advised of the schedule of pre-bidding conference/s by fax.** Said meetings will be held at the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Administrative and Financial Services, Rm. 408, 4th Floor, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Building, Pasay City.

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bid evaluation, and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget of the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at bid opening. **LATE BIDS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED. ALTERNATIVE BIDS SHALL BE REJECTED.**

This Invitation is also advertised with the Government Electronic Procurement System (G-EPS) at **www.procurementservice.org**, Senate website at **www.senate.gov.ph**, and posted at the 4th Floor Senate bulletin board.

For inquiry, please call the BAC Secretariat Office at telefax no. 552-6601 local 1602 (c/o Rose de Castro).

THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES RESERVES THE RIGHT TO 1) REVIEW ALL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS; 2) REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS; 3) CONFISCATE THE BID BOND AND/OR PURSUE APPROPRIATE LEGAL ACTION SHOULD THE WINNING BIDDER REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE AWARD; 4) WAIVE ANY DEFECTS CONTAINED THEREIN; and/or 5) ACCEPT THE OFFER MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT. ANY DECISION MADE BY THE SENATE IS FINAL AND EXECUTORY.

FURTHER, THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY THE BIDDER OR WINNING BIDDER, AS THE CASE MAY BE, FOR ANY EXPENSE OR LOSS THAT SAID PARTY(IES) MAY INCUR IN ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-BIDDING AND BIDDING PROCESS NOR DOES IT GUARANTEE THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ARNEL JOSE S. BAÑAS
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Oct. 13, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Central Regional Office Luzon Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FOR WAREHOUSE GRAINS HANDLING SERVICES NFA REGION III

The National Food Authority, NFA Central Luzon Regional Office, Cabanatuan City, through its 2007 Corporate Operating Budget intends to apply the sum of P28,900,780.80 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the provision of warehouse handling services for the movement of grain stocks and by-products in the warehouses, ricemills and other installations in Region III and to load/unload to/from trucks said commodities as follows.

PROVINCES	LOT NO	LOCATION OF WAREHOUSE	VOLUME TO BE HANDLED (IN BAGS)	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
Aurora	I	GID-Baler	243,000	P 1,108,080.00
		Bartolome-Ma Aurora		
		GID-Casiguran		
Bataan	II	GID 1 & 2-Balanga	394,350	1,743,027.00
		FLGC-Dinalupihan		
Bulacan	III	GID 1,2 & 3 – Balagtas	430,000	2,081,200.00
	IV	GID 1 & 2 – San Ildefonso	400,000	1,936,000.00
	V	GID 1 & 2 – Tikay	250,000	1,210,000.00
	VI	GID 1 & 2 – Sta Rita	410,000	984,400.00
Nueva Ecija	VII	Whse 1-13 – Cab City	977,645	4,751,354.70
		Whse 1 & 2 – Gapan		
	VIII	Aliaga Whse-Aliaga	400,000	1,944,000.00
		GID-Bongabon		
		Guimba Whse 1-2		
		Muñoz RM/Dryer		
Pampanga	IX	Sindalan 1 and 2	691,740	3,265,012.80
	X	Del Rosario 1 and 2	415,000	1,958,800.00
Tarlac	XI	Aguso 1-3 & 5	540,750	2,811,900.00
	XII	GID 1-3	510,750	2,655,900.00
		Concepcion-Jefmin		
Zambales	XIII	GID and Mango	289,065	1,451,106.30
		Terminal-Iba		
		Castillejos Whse		
Total			5,952,300	P 28,500,780.30

The prospective bidder may bid in any or all lots upon payment of a non-refundable application/bidding fee and submission of a certified photocopy each of the documents stated below:

1) DTI business name registration, CDA Registration and/or SEC registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate,
2) Valid and current Mayor's Permit/Official Receipt

Schedule of application/bidding fees are as follows:

LOT NO	BIDDING FEE	LOT NO	BIDDING FEE
I	P 2,000.00	VIII	P 2,000.00
II	P 2,000.00	IX	P 3,000.00
III	P 2,500.00	X	P 2,000.00
IV	P 2,000.00	XI	P 2,500.00
V	P 2,000.00	XII	P 2,500.00
VI	P 2,000.00	XIII	P 2,000.00
VII	P 3,500.00		

The issuance of bid documents, pre-bidding conference, bidding proper and other schedule of activities are as follows:

PARTICULARS	DATE
1. Issuance of Application and Bidding Documents	October 13-25, 2006
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	October 26, 2006 (10:00AM)
3. Deadline of submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	November 7, 2006 (10:00 AM)
4. Bid Evaluation	November 8-15, 2006
5. Post-Qualification	November 16-23, 2006
6. Notice of Award	November 24, 2006

Eligibility criteria includes, among others that the value of the prospective bidder's largest single contract, adjusted to current prices using the wholesale consumer price index completed and similar to the contract to be bid, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid

The bidding shall be governed by RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman or Secretariat at NFA-CLRO, Cabanatuan City with Telephone Nos. (044)-463-1167, (044)-463-1168 and (044)-463-1233

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) RUBEN J. RESIDE
Asst Regional Director/RBAC Chairman

(PDI–Oct. 13 & 20, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
LIN JIN MARKETING CORPORATION 50 Pilar Banzon St., BF Homes Parañaque City	Jongho Park	Marketing Manager
MDS CIRCUIT TECHNOLOGY, INC. Units 9-1 & 9-4 Net One Center 3rd Ave. E-SITP Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila	Yoshiyuki Maemoto	Technical Manager – Technical Department
DELL INTERNATIONAL SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 27/F RCBC Plaza Tower 2, Ayala Ave., cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. Makati City	Clara Miranda Bradbury	Communications Sr. Consultant
ENPPLE CORPORATION U-2408 Medical Plaza, San Miguel Ave. San Antonio, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Kyoung A Kim (w/o Lee)	Manager
ENPPLE CORPORATION U-2408 Medical Plaza, San Miguel Ave. San Antonio, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Myung Nam Shin	Information Systems Operations Manager
S-TECH LTD. 28/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza Ayala Ave., Makati City	Alon Daniel Wohlmuth	Chief Executive Officer
HAPPY GREEN MARKETING AND TRADING CORPORATION U1710-Tycoon Centre, Pearl Drive Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Mi Sook Hyun (w/o Lee)	Manager
DYNAMIC SUCCESS CONSULTANCY 333 Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Jay Kumar Pandey	Travel Consultant
SYKES ASIA, INC. 26/F, Robinson's Summit Bldg. 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Chandra Andriyana	Indonesian Client Support
KIM JAE INTERNATIONAL, INC. #3 Batulao St., Bo. Tatalon Quezon City	Wan Su Kim	General Manager
SYKES ASIA, INC. 26/F, Robinson's Summit Bldg. 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Nu Trany Nguyen	Vietnamese Client Support

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Oct. 13, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) SECRETARIAT OFFICE
Tel. No. (632) 455-2758 Mobile Phone: (+63) 928 4102732
e-mail: vsvillaruma@nfa.gov.ph

Bid Bulletin No. 2

Bidding for the Supply and Delivery of UPS and Servers

For the information and guidance of the prospective bidders for the supply and delivery of UPS and Servers and in reply to queries received, hereunder are clarifications on the technical specifications:

1. For Lot 1, Servers.
   "RAM: (2) 2GB, PC2 3200 DDR2, SDRAM ECC" means that the bidder shall supply 2 units of 2GB RAM for a total of 4GB.
2. For Lots 2 and 3, UPS. Surge Protection and Filtering is built-in as originally required.

Further, be advised that the new schedule of submission of bid documents will be on October 24, 2006 from 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. and opening of bids will be at 2:00 p.m. of the same day.

Issued this 12th day of October 2006.

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chairperson

(PDI–Oct. 13, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Central Regional Office Luzon Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FOR INTEGRATED CARGO HANDLING SERVICES FOR NFA REGION III

The National Food Authority, NFA Central Luzon Regional Office, Cabanatuan City, through its 2007 Corporate Operating Budget intends to apply the sum of P41,589,980.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the provision of Integrated Cargo Handling Services at Subic Port for the year 2007. The volume to be discharged estimated at 115,000 MT of NFA imported grains, more or less. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The scope of services to be bid for integrated services at Subic Port include Arrastre, Stevedoring, Wharfage, Hustling, Truckscaling, Opening/Closing of Hatches, Stand-By Charges, Import Entry documentation / Gate Pass, and other Port Services.

The application for eligibility and pertinent bidding documents can be secured from NFA CLRO, Cabanatuan City, Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) upon payment of a non-refundable application fee of P5,000.00 and submission of certified xerox copy each of the following documents:

1) DTI business name registration, CDA Registration and/or SEC registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate;
2) Updated Mayor's Permit and Official Receipt;
3) Current registration certificate as cargo handler/Permit To Operate (PTO) issued by SBMA;
4) Current Certificate of good standing with SBMA;
5) Certification of at least three (3) years experience in grains (in bags) cargo handling / unloading (pierside) for the past three (3) years issued by PPA or SBMA as principal contractor.

The bidding of Integrated Services shall be conducted at NFA-CLRO, Conference Room, Cabanatuan City on the following schedule:

	PARTICULARS	DATE	TIME
1.	Issuance of Bid Application and Bid Documents	October 16-27, 2006 Regular Working Days	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
2.	Pre-Bidding Conference	October 30, 2006	2:00 p.m.
3.	Submission and Opening of Bids	November 09, 2006	10:00 a.m.

The bidding of Integrated Cargo Handling Services at Subic Port shall be governed by RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman or Secretariat at NFA-CLRO, Cabanatuan City with Telephone Nos. (044)-463-1167, (044)-463-1168 and (044)-463-1233.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT

(Sgd.) **RUBEN J. RESIDE**
RBAC Chairman / Asst. Regional Director

(PDI – October 13 & 20, 2006)

JOB market COMPACT
Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514.
JOB Market

J.A. JONES INTERNATIONAL CO.
is in need of the following for their project
at Port-au-Prince, Haiti

- **HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS**
- **HE MECHANICS**
- **TOWER CRANE OPERATORS**
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- **GENERAL FOREMAN** (FINISHER, DOORS & HARDWARES, FEBR WINDOWS, LOW VOLTAGE, STORM DRAIN, FORMWORK, BARRIERS, LANDSCAPE, SITE STRUCTURES, MECHANICAL, FUEL SYSTEM, PERIMETER WALL)
- **FIELD ENGINEERS** (CIVIL, ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL)
- **QC ENGINEERS** (CIVIL, ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL)
- **QA/QC INSPECTORS** (CIVIL, ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL, BATCH PLANT)
- **ACCOUNTANTS**
- **SURVEYORS**
- **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**
- **WAREHOUSEMAN**
- **SAFETY INSPECTOR**

Minimum of five (5) years work experience in building construction and related field.

Qualified and interested applicants may apply personally with two (2) sets of bio-data, resumé of work experience with detailed employment history and job description, recent photo, employment certifications and other supporting documents at:

PARMAN INCORPORATED
Personnel Department
7F MGF Champaca Building
Amorsolo Street corner Pasay Road
Legaspi Village, Makati City

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1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/ contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time		Non-Refundable Fee
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
44 Units ECCS Machine Plus: Four (4) Years Maintenance Services	P14,241,920.00	October 19, 2006 1:30 PM	November 8, 2006 1:00 PM	P 7,200.00

The Bid Documents shall be available at the General Services Department starting October 6, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at GSD Conference Room, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar St., Malate, Manila.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes placed in single outer envelope and sealed accordingly in the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the LBP-Requisitions Management Division at telephone nos. 551-2200 locals 2452, 2453, 7233 & 7234.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – October 6 & 13, 2006)

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Tel# 889-7956

NOTICE

Please take notice that the Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the change in the corporate name of CENTRAL AZUCARERA DE LA CARLOTA to CADP GROUP CORPORATION on January 15, 2003.

FLORENCIO M. MAMAUAG, JR.
VP Legal & Asst. Corporate Secretary

(PDI–October 6 & 13, 2006)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that MCCI CORPORATION Stock Certificates No. C4938 for 986 shares and No. C5386 for 591 shares issued to Esmeraldo C. Roque, Jr. have been lost. If no contest is received on or before October 13, 2007, new certificates will be issued in lieu of the lost ones.

(PDI–Sept. 29, Oct. 6 & 13, 2006)

NOTICE

Please take notice that the Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the change in the corporate name of CENTRAL AZUCARERA DON PEDRO to ROXAS HOLDINGS, INC. on December 11, 2001.

FLORENCIO M. MAMAUAG, JR.
VP Legal & Asst. Corporate Secretary

(PDI – October 6 & 13, 2006)

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of **KYUDENKO – NEEDS CREATOR IT CORPORATION** shortening the term of its existence to up to September 4, 2006, thereby dissolving the said corporation on said date have been approved by a majority of its Board of Directors and by two-thirds (2/3) of the stockholders of said corporation.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present same to its Head Office at the 6th Floor, Filipino Building, 135 dela Rosa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City or Mr. Koichi Maki, Treasurer, No. 13 Love Street, Remanville Executive Village, Don Bosco, Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque City.

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

(Sgd.) **GREGORIO M. BATILLER, JR.**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI–Oct. 6, 13 & 20, 2006)

OBITUARIES

THE MISSIONARY BENEDICTINE SISTERS
St. Scholastica's Priory, Manila

on their centennial year of foundation in the Philippines announce the peaceful death of their centenary sister

SISTER MAGDALEN DIETZ, OSB

(May 29, 1906 – October 11, 2006)

at St. Scholastica's Convent, Baguio City on October 11, 2006. She finally received what she had longed for – to be in the loving embrace of God. Her remains lie in state at the convent's chapel in Baguio. Interment will be at the Baguio City public cemetery on October 13, 2006 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

Message of Thanks

SK RODOLFO C. BAGAY

(January 31, 1935 – October 2, 2006)

Our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to Tatay Rody's relatives and friends, students and colleagues who visited us, offered prayers and Masses, sent flowers and extended assistance, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

Coring
Mon & Sonnee, Joel & Penny, Erna & Clemen,
Jong & Ces, Loy & Ejie and Robert

"Hope springs eternal in my heart. Not even insurmountable odds can dampen the spirit that has withstood the crucibles of war"

– from "Hope Eternal & True"
RC BAGAY 2004

Roberto A. Angeles

June 9, 1917 to October 11, 2006

Hinihiling ng kanyang pamilya, si ***Maria Martha*** at ***Angelito*** at ***Marilyn***, ***Mayeth***, ***Junjun*** at ***Mylene*** na mag-alay ang mga kaibigan at mambabasa ng mga panalangin para sa kapayapaan ng kaniyang kaluluwa.

Ang kaniyang mga labi mananatili sa Santuario de San Jose Mortuary, East Greenhills hanggang ika-15 ng Oktubre, 2006.

GERALDINE PICAR Y. APOSTOL

Now peacefully rests in the Infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 10th of October, 2006 at the age of 60.

Her bereaved family, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her cremated remains lie in state at Capilla de San Francisco de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. Mass will be celebrated at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, October 13 and at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 14. A final Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Sunday, October 15 at 9:00 a.m. in the Capilla de San Francisco.

Interment ceremonies will take place at Crypt III in the Sanctuario de San Antonio Church.

PAULINO "JOJO" B. IMPERIAL, JR.

Retiree of Westmont, United Laboratories, Inc.

Peacefully joined his Creator on October 10, 2006 at the age of 55.

His body lies in state at Imperial Funeral Parlor, Peñafrancia St., Naga City.

Interment will follow at the Sto. Niño Cemetery after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Basilica Church.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

More Classified Ads

Land Bank of the Philippines	Page A17
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National Food Authority	Page B8
Insurance Commission	Page B8

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Insurance fund for BSP execs OKd

₱500M set aside to cover expenses due to court cases

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas has put up a P500-million insurance fund for its directors and officers to cover the cost of possible court cases that may arise in the exercise of their duties, particularly in banking supervision and regulation.

Official BSP documents showed that the fund would cover "any liability of directors and officers that may arise in connection with the exercise of their functions."

Banking sources said the insurance fund would be handled by the state-owned Government Service Insurance System. The BSP's contribution to the fund was charged to the institution's operating expenses.

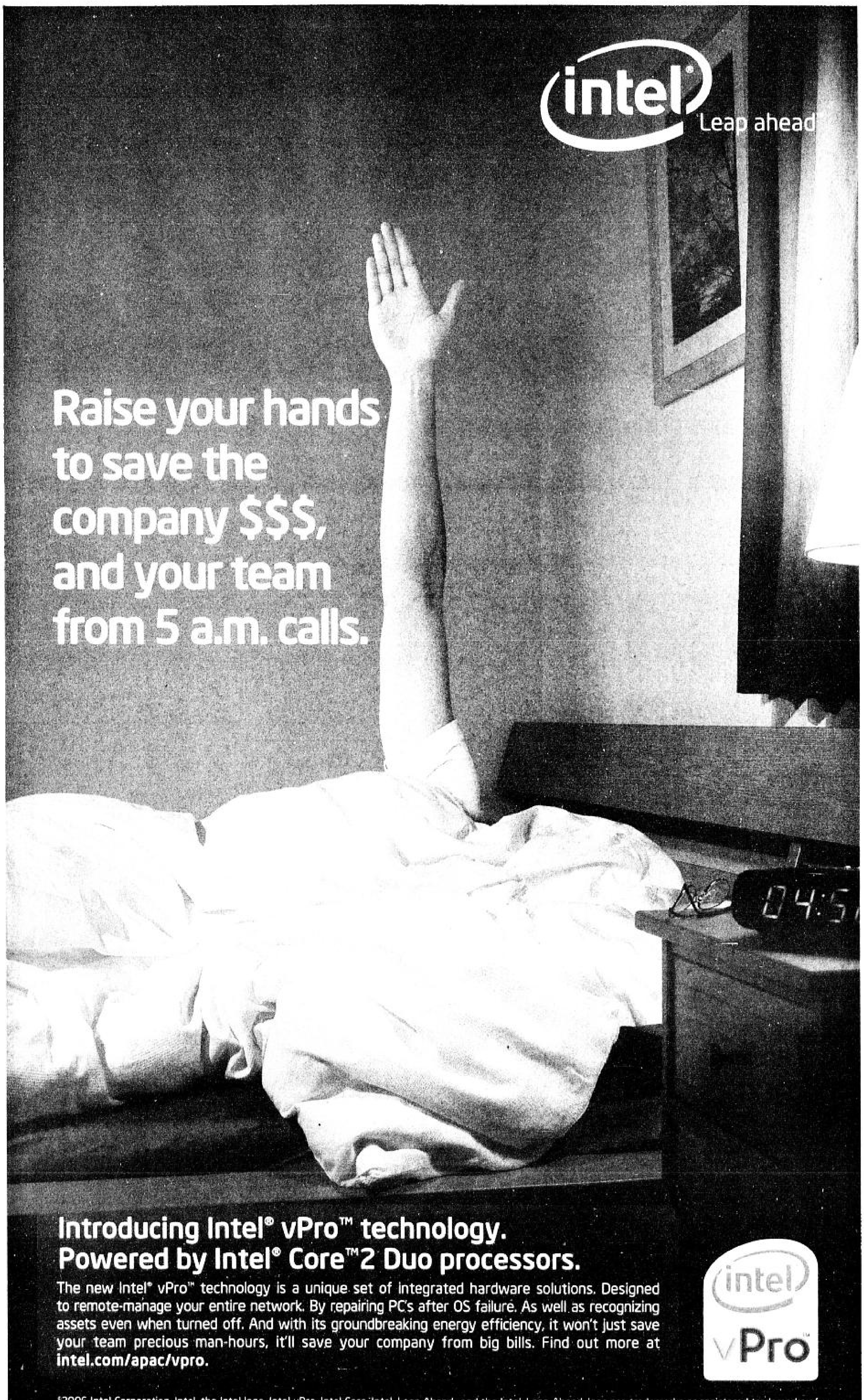
The fund was deemed as necessary as the BSP's existing charter does not provide for immunity from lawsuits.

The BSP earlier proposed amendments to its charter that would minimize the risks of being sued. It specifically sought authority to undertake risk-based consolidated supervision, which would allow the examination of banks and its subsidiaries/affiliate; compel banks to infuse additional capital; approve the transfer or acquisition of shares in a bank that would affect a change in the majority ownership, and provide its officers immunity from lawsuits.

These additional powers were aimed at allowing the BSP to supervise banks and financial institutions more effectively.

They are in line with the "more forceful" strategy advocated by the International Monetary Fund to boost the banking system.

A source, however, said that since charter amendments proposed in Congress would likely take a long time to be approved, the BSP deemed it necessary to act now by setting up the said insurance fund.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Money in the Bank

By Zennon Kapron, Intel Asia Pacific Financial Services Vertical Industry Manager

Financial services companies are demanding smaller, faster, and smarter solutions. They are discovering that the same value points are addressed using new desktop technologies, without the infrastructure restrictions or inflexible structures that older, terminal-based systems impose. Better performance, better manageability and more security all help front-office staff perform their jobs - and deliver the responsiveness demanded by today's banking customers.

There has been a shift towards a more complete customer experience and convenience. In many banks, tellers are required to perform cross-selling activity at the window, without relying on a separate set of advisors for every sales opportunity. This new approach relies on staff being able to quickly access and analyze customer information. A teller needs a single source of truth when it comes to information on the customer's position and their financial lifecycle.

However, older terminals at many banks are unable to present a single window into customer data. A text-based terminal cannot provide prompts, flag new special offers to the teller, or suggest other products that fit the customer's profile.

A new breed of high performance PCs can now help tellers be more proactive. They can run a host of specifically-tailored marketing applications-ideal for on-the-spot up-selling or cross selling opportunities at the first point of customer contact.

Financial advisors in bank branches also benefit from highly specific yet compute-intensive applications similar to those used at capital markets firms. Financial advisors can now use these applications to increase customer visibility, improve cross-selling rates and increase wallet share.

High-performance desktop PCs also offer access to real-time customer views and account value positions. Using connected PCs, immediate access to information that can help bank staff seize short-term market opportunities and make best-case recommendations to their clients.

Financial services firms require tremendous amounts of computing resource to handle all transactions, local and international, demanded by a range of customers. The ability of high-power PCs to link into existing global networks provides a new range of flexibility and responsiveness, particularly for Internet banking and account management, which need constant customization to stay fresh. These channels demand the highest levels of security; a need that only technology can fulfill in today's complex business environments.

Customer responsiveness goes beyond front-end applications. Highly scalable infrastructures are required to efficiently connect the customer to the global financial industry. If a system can display multiple product offerings at the branch position, but cannot quickly access the data and decision support it needs, business opportunities vanish and customer satisfaction suffers.

Dual-core processor-based desktop PCs employ advanced management and security techniques that create an unprecedented combination of agility and capability. With this new breed of powerful desktops, staff can enjoy a responsive experience as they multitask across multiple demanding applications while bank security and management tasks continue to run in the background.

Secured transactions amounting to million of dollars and exposing confidential client data are transacted on a daily basis. Using new hardware platforms, software experts have collaborated with hardware R&D teams to solve security issues posed by desktop machines. Increased user access to the compute kernel requires extra vigilance.

Now, critical security applications can run in the background in a virtual partition while users are working on compute-intensive tasks within the standard operating system (OS) environment. This approach keeps vital security processes isolated from potential OS security compromises and ensures they are isolated from threats such as viral emails. Updates and security management can even be managed while the machine is powered down for maximum convenience and firewalled safety.

IT managers have already welcomed this new approach to security. It brings remote management techniques to the desktop that previously only existed on servers.

The New Solution

The new solution bringing relief to the financial services industry's highly varied demands are PCs with Intel® vPro™ technology. Provided on a coherent, standardized system, it includes manageability and proactive security features with the second-generation of Intel® Active Management Technology (Intel® AMT) built into the chipset, and Intel® Virtualization Technology (Intel® VT). Intel® VT is integrated into the new dual-core Intel® Core™2 Duo processor featured on every PC with Intel vPro technology.

These hardware innovations, when combined with industry software solutions, offer unprecedented manageability, security, and energy efficient performance together with reduced operating costs and increased user-level functionality. Intel AMT can even manage, inventory, diagnose, and repair PCs when they are turned off or experience OS or hard drive interruptions.

ADVT.

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

BUSINESS *Friday*

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

DE JESUS

More than just CEOs, communicators, too

What do Steve Jobs, Jack Welch, Bill Gates and Lee Iacocca have in common?

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ICONIC EXECUTIVE officers such as Apple Computer's Steve Jobs, General Electric's Jack Welch, Microsoft's Bill Gates and Chrysler's Lee Iacocca have another thing in common aside from being geniuses at marketing, management and finance.

They were all great communicators.

CEOs like them understood that they are also being paid to effectively convey to the consumers, government regulators, stockholders and the general public what their corporation is doing and how they are doing it.

Informing the public about what their companies stand for is not something they delegate fully to their direct commands. Instead, they take the front line position knowing that for many people, they are the face of their corporation.

The Philippines has its share of CEOs who share writer James Humes' belief that "the art of communication is the language of leadership."

Two of them are Jose P. De Jesus, president and CEO of Manila North Tollways Corp., which operates the North Luzon Expressway and Edgar O. Chua, country chair of the Shell companies in the Philippines.

Tollway program

Nobody wants to hear about toll rates going up, but that was exactly what De Jesus had to tell his public when the new and improved North Luzon Expressway opened to the public in February of 2005.

To make the public understand and accept the fact that rates will definitely go up by as much as 500 percent, he came up with a Toll Rate Management Plan of which an Integrated Communication Program was a major component.

That program went into effect months before actual opening and he and his team took the time to dialog with civil society, lenders, the President and her Cabinet members and even media on the reasons behind the sudden jump in the toll rates and the benefits of having a modern tollway.

CHUA

De Jesus personally talked to leaders of local government units affected by the new tollway, development leaders who were suspicious of "big business," with motorists who are expected to feel the shock of paying in-

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From page B2-1

creased toll fees and even the president herself, to impress on her the importance of the tollway.

He also presided over meetings with inhouse and outsourced managerial and technical talents who contributed to the implementation of the communication plan.

The team included executives and experts in public relations, advertising, advocacy management, community relations and government relations.

The final test came on Feb. 10, 2005 when the tollway was formally opened with nary an incident. Although there were complaints on the high toll rate, the motorists eventually saw that their money went to a tollway that was much better than what it replaced.

Clean and green neighbor

Oil companies are the favorite whipping boys of many cause-oriented groups because they are portrayed as evil companies that indiscriminately jack up petroleum prices at the pump and polluters of the environment.

Shell country chair Edgar O. Chua knows this burden facing the oil companies, which is why he has taken it upon himself to play pivotal roles in implementing communication activities that convey Shell's principles of environmental protection and being a responsible corporation.

Chua, for instance, heads the health cluster of the Business and Millennium Development Goals Initiative of the country's business community.

He also leads the campaign to continuously improve in health, safety and environment not just within Shell but in the greater business community.

Recognizing the role of the company in the energy crisis, Chua prioritized the implementation of the energy conservation campaign through "Shell Tipid Tips."

He also shares his passion and know-how to the private sector as chair of the Philippine Business for the Environment and co-chair of the environmental committee of the Management Association of the Philippines.

Chua believes that these programs present opportunities for Shell to promote its principles, core values and commitments of the Shell group to its general business principles, particularly to sustainable development.

One measure of success of the communication program is the growing number of Shell employees who volunteer their time and expertise to the company's corporate social responsibility and social development projects.

Excel awards

Chua and De Jesus are just two of a growing number of CEOs who were given the Award of Excellence by the International Association of Business Communicators Philippines during its CEO Excel or Communication Excellence in Organization Awards.

Started just last year, the awards recognize top-level managers whose communication skills helped achieve business and stakeholder objectives.

Other recipients include Unilever Philippines CEO Howard Belton, Johnson and Johnson president Grace del Rosario-Castano and National Transmission Co. president Allan Ortiz.

Small firm banks on size to take on giant rivals

Faster mobility and more flexibility compared with large competitors

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S INFORMATION technology industry holds "tremendous" growth potential in the coming years, and a small company is betting that it can dominate the business despite the presence of bigger rivals.

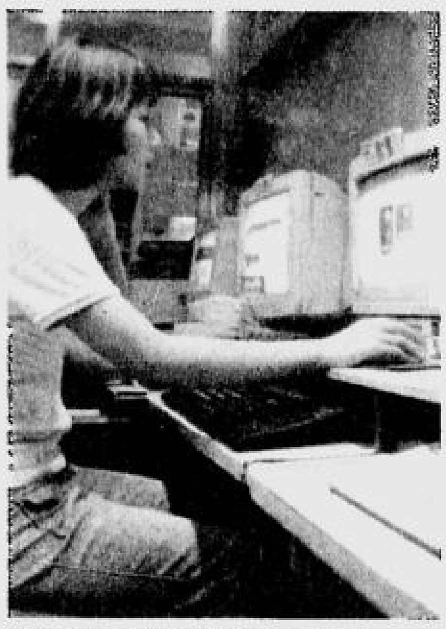
In fact, so confident is the Intellectual Property Ventures Group Corp. in the sector and its own business model that its chief is predicting a sharp increase in the company's revenues this year, despite a shaky start in 2005.

"We made P65 million in the first half, and the second half will be a multiple of that," IP Ventures CEO Enrique Y. Gonzalez said in an interview, adding that all the company's business segments are growing rapidly.

"We are seeing double-digit growth every month," he added.

IP Ventures is a Philippine Stock Exchange-listed firm engaged in IT and telecommunications, online gaming services and call center operations. Its three main units are IP e-Games, IP Converge Data Center and IP Contact Center.

Gonzalez is unfazed that IP Ventures is going head to head against ePLDT, the unit of the telecommunications giant which is tasked to develop business opportunities in the same sector.



A SMALLER firm can leverage its smaller bureaucracy to get the jump on larger competitors.

Earlier this year, PLDT unveiled a plan to shift its focus from the plateauing mobile phone market to business opportunities in the IT sector.

Since then, its ePLDT unit has embarked on an aggressive expansion program, acquiring firms that complement its IT thrust like call centers, Internet café chains and even online gaming firms.

Despite ePLDT's financial muscle, IP Ventures believes it can give the telecommunication giant a run for its money by emphasizing on advantages in service delivery and pricing.

"The market needs alternatives," the IP Ventures head said. "Competition is good because we need alternatives to a monopoly."

In addition, a relatively smaller firm like IP Ventures can leverage its smaller bureaucracy to get the jump on larger competitors like ePLDT.

"What would take them one to two months to decide on, we can make overnight," Enriquez said.

The IP Ventures chief is particularly excited about the online gaming market, which he believes will grow fivefold into a $100 million-per-year industry by 2010.

IP e-Games is well positioned to take advantage of the growth, especially since it currently has the largest subscriber base for its games, according to the firm.

Enriquez said the company has a roster of 1.6 million members, of which around 670,000 are active "gamers."

"At any point in time, we have over 30,000 users who are online," he said, adding that this is substantially higher than the online gaming service run by rival ePLDT.

IP Ventures also launched its foray into the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry recently, with its own call center operation at its Makati City head office.

The hiring of call center staffers will swell IP Ventures' ranks to over 500 people by yearend, from its current headcount of 150, but Enriquez said he is aiming for at least 1,000 call center operators for the firm to reach "critical mass" in the highly competitive business.

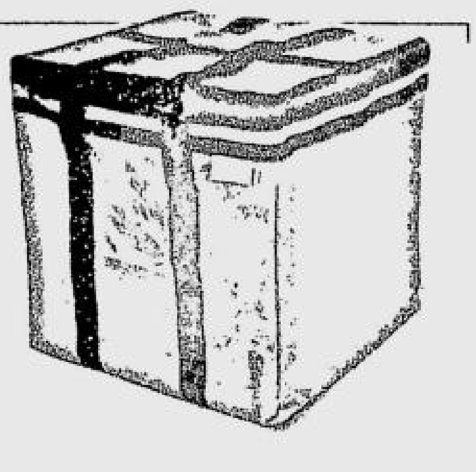
"We have already locked in a Fortune 500 company to service their needs from the Philippines," he said.

Despite the perceived call center glut in the country, Enriquez believes the industry is still at its infancy, especially since there are still many back office and support services being run out of high-cost regions like the US, Europe and Australia.

"These are very early days for the call center industry," he said. "We expect this to last for another 10 years."

Enriquez brushed aside speculation that IP Ventures' recent successes will make it an attractive acquisition target for rivals like ePLDT, which has already flexed its financial muscle in the past to buy out potential competitors.

"We didn't build this company just to flip it," he said, aware that selling out to dominant players is a widely accepted practice in the IT business. "We're a long-term player."



BALIKBAYAN Gear, maker of Balikbayan Box Cover, recently launched the Free Organizer Cube promo where every purchase of any-sized Box Cover at selected stores entitles the buyer a free Organizer Cube. Participating stores include: Robinsons Handyman (Pioneer, Festival and Novaliches), and Ace Hardware (Manila, Festival, Cubao and Bicutan Annex). Promo is on Oct. 15-Nov. 30, 2006.

Bayer appoints Filipino firm as distributor

MULTINATIONAL CHEMICAL CORPORATION Bayer recently appointed Pycor Inc. as the Philippine distributor of its professional pest management products under the environmental science category.

Pycor Inc., a Filipino-owned firm known for its complete range of pest control chemicals and equipment, becomes the exclusive distributor of Agenda EC, Premise EC, Maxforce Gel, Responsar, Cislin WP/EC, Crackdown SC/EC and Coopex WP/EC.

For over two decades now, Pycor Inc. has taken pride in providing superior products, coupled with excellent customer service, for homes and institutions throughout the Philippines.

They have also supported the professional pest control industry with technical support programs—often partnering with pest control professionals in the education of consumers in the safe and proper use of their products.

"Our goal has always been to increase every Filipino's awareness on the need for various types of pest management programs in their homes and businesses.

"With the Bayer products now in our portfolio, I believe we have a complete arsenal that will allow us to come up with relevant, out-of-the-box programs to make our communities cleaner, healthier and pest-free," said Pycor Inc. CEO Gary Pua. *For more info on Pycor call 732-0778.*

Bamboo production talk set in November

MANY THINGS HAVE BEEN said about the bamboo plant—from a lowly plant to the most versatile and flexible grass.

Its value as a construction material, food source and source of useful products has been recognized these past years.

Until recently, however, bamboos were not considered a cultivated crop which is why in some places, they are about to disappear due to increasing demand for bamboo products.

But production and processing technologies are available in the country.

The Carolina Bamboo Garden under Kay Jimenez plus the expertise of bamboo experts in the country, the Garden is offering its first training on bamboo production on Nov. 4, 2006. *For inquiries, call 867-1055 or e-mail citalacdan@yahoo.com.*

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ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema		My Girl	Pasion de Amor	Yakitate! Japan	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo	Maging Sino Ka Man	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Guinness World Records: 50 Yrs, 50 Records		Lost (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season VI)		Bassmaster (Season I)		Maximum Exposure (Season II)		WRC 2006, Rally XS	E Buzz	XXX					Ronin
bTV				Sidelines: L.A. Hoops		NBA Inside Stuff	NBA Jam	NBA Greatest Game				2006 Champs League Q/Finals				2006 Champs League Q/Finals			
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Max Steel: The [illegible]	Robotboy	Mirmo De Pon [illegible] Mirmo De Pon	Pokemon The Johto Journey [illegible] The Johto Journey	The Justirisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog [illegible] Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King [illegible] Shaman King
Cinemax				The School Of Rock			The Making Of Battlestar Galactica 2	Once Upon A Time In Mexico (6:15 PM)				The Flash			Van Helsing				Arlington Road (11:40PM)
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		The Closer		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Extreme Evidence	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		L.O. Criminal Intent + Trace		Prison Break	
Discovery Channel	Connect	Engineering Series		Risk Takers		How Do They Do It	Building The Ultimate	Beyond Tomorrow		Rides		American Chopper		How Do They Do It	Building The Ultimate			Crime Night	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Ad Attack/Unlaikative Bunny	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Emperor's New School/ Once Upon A Vista/ [illegible] Emperor's New School	America's Funniest Home Video	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies/Winnie The Pooh Spring Time With Roo	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Women's Pro Billiards '06		ESPN Great Outdoor Games				MLB Cship Series Game2						Sportscenter Asia	Classic Boxing		Classic Boxing		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Everwood		American Dreams		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Degeneres Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	The Good Code: The Natural Law	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	The Donut Man	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Backstage	The Gospel Of Life In Health	Defending Life	Life on The Rock Encore		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	Parable	EWTN Bookmark	St. Thomas Aquinas In Today's World	Fr. John Corapi	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
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Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Just Cause						Regenesis	
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Hero TV	Combattler V	Sunny Pig	Last Exile	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar, A Little Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Gunlock	Full Metal Panic Fumoffu	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Last Exile	Fortune Quest	BBDaman Bakugaiden V	Beyblade G-Revolution	Rayn-Oh	Combattler V	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Karera Sports TV	
JackTV		Back Track				Sweat	X-Play	Heat		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hate Chris	Family Guy	American Dad	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY Jewelry Making	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Intimate Portrait		Clean House		Martha		Isaac		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure
MTV Philippines		MTV Hits	VH1 Fabulous Life of Leo & Gisele	VH1 Fabulous Life of J.Lo & Marc	Boiling Points	My Own	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	MTV Hits	MTV Diyes		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV News	Rockola	VH1 Fabulous Life of Britney & Kevin	VH1 Fabulous Life of Miami
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Extraterrestrial				Top 5		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Wow!		Martial Arts Week					
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Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nangi-Ale Sa Daang Daan		Ang Pagbubuyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	Ang Mga Nangi-Ale Sa Daang Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold! The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Avatar: The Legend Of Aang/ Kappa Mikey		SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up/ Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Trollz	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Pasan Ko Ang Daigdig				Batas Mo, Batas Ko				Hoodlum 2: Miss Na Miss Kita				Roses And Lollipops				Gamitan
Qtv	Starry Night	Samurai X	Battle B-Daman	BB Daman Bakugaiden	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle		Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	NCIS		CSI: Miami		Without A Trace		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sheperds Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports												Npp: Tunervision				Sportsdesk		Spanish League	
Star Movies		Trump Unauthorised			Madison (4:45 PM)				Cold Mountain (6:25 PM)					Beauty Shop			The Princess Diaries 2		
Star World	Two And A Half Men	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		Third Watch		NYPD Blue		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	Superman The Animated Series	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	7th Heaven	Charmed (8:15 PM)		Ghost Whisperer (9:15 PM)		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXilog

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Creating brands for Central Luzon products

Syempre Aurora, Galing Bataan, Tatak Bulakeño, Proudly Novo Ecijano . . .

By Miko L. Morelos

FOR OVER 50 YEARS, Eufemia de la Rosa has been making a living out of *bagoong* (fish paste) and *patis* (fish sauce). She sells these condiments in the markets which provides the family its main source of income.

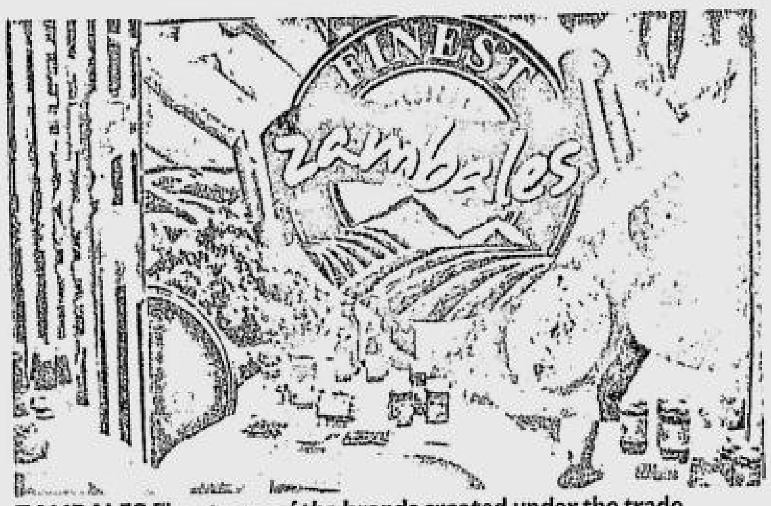
An acting dean of an Olongapo City-based college, Lilibeth Llarena recently ventured into what she calls the "chocolate artistry." And for someone who is a self-confessed chocoholic, she has harnessed her addiction into something profitable.

De la Rosa's *bagoong* and Llarena's chocolates are just two of the products sold under the brand "Zambales Finest"—a regional brand created by the Department of Trade and Industry Region III's Brand Development Project. The branding aims to promote the products made in Central Luzon and products were seen in the 8th Likha ng Central Luzon trade fair at the Megatrade Hall 1 in SM Megamall.

The fair, which closed on Oct. 8, showcased the finest products from Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac and Zambales.

Under the brand development program, the DTI creates brands for every province and gets promising micro and small and medium enterprises to join. The trade department has been developing small players in the market as mandated by Republic Act No. 9178, the Barangay Micro Business Enterprise Act of 2002. The government has set a policy to promote the establishment of SMEs by providing various incentives and benefits.

The program has developed regional brands: Syempre Aurora, Galing Bataan, Tatak Bulakeño, Proudly Novo Ecijano, Vida Pampanga, Tarlac's Very Own and Zambales Finest.



ZAMBALES Finest, one of the brands created under the trade department's Brand Development Project, features Nana Emyang's Bagoong and Patis, and Carmeli's Specialty Chocolates.

No stranger to business

Llarena is no stranger in business. Before she started her chocolate business last year, she made and sold scented candles. She had also worked as a wedding coordinator in Olongapo.

She teaches in the College of Business and Accountancy of Gordon College in Olongapo, handling management subjects. She says her exposure in the business world provides the experience she shares to her students in classroom lectures.

But after her day job, she goes to her kitchen, experimenting and exploring the wonders of chocolate. In her kitchen, she develops different varieties of chocolate—from cookies and cream to choco-mints.

Main source of income

Aside from *bagoong* and *patis*, Eufemia, fondly called by her children Nana Emyang, also raised livestock, like pigs and fish, to augment the family's income. But son Ivan, says the condiments had always been the most profitable business and was the family's main source of income.

Ivan says if it weren't for *bagoong*, they would not have been able to go to school and finish their studies. Nana Emyang has four children.

Ivan took over the family business in 2000. Three years later he saw the need for innovation in their packaging to compete with other fish products. He believes that he must adapt to the changes of time to survive in the business.

Ivan prides in his mother's *bagoong* recipe. No preservatives whatsoever; only fish and salt—the traditional Ilocano way of making *bagoong*—which makes their product very organic, he says.

Carmeli's

Llarena says that last year, she tried the chocolate business, which she named Carmeli's Specialty Chocolates. She coined the name Carmeli from her devotion to the Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

At first, it was tough considering that chocolates are sensitive to temperature changes. But with dedication and hard work, Llarena managed to pull her business together. She says her business is the only registered chocolate artistry business in Olongapo.

The trip to Manila for the trade fair was productive for Llarena and her chocolate business. She had come here to Manila to try and get a bigger slice of the chocolate market.

She says her sales for chocolates met her expectations. Her bulk orders for giveaways also increased and she says orders are under negotiation. She also got bookings for her chocolate fountain rental.

For Ivan, however, the trip was not that fruitful.

"My sales dipped this year compared to last year's fair," he says. "Maybe people didn't want to spend too much as a result of the typhoon ['Milenyo']."

Despite the setback, Ivan says he was still able to get bulk orders, all of which are still under negotiation.

Brand health check - I

From page B2-6

spent 10 minutes on your site?

2. Consistency

Consistency is especially important when it comes to navigation. You should ensure that your brand's core message is reflected consistently in your site's navigation, that consumers can rely on your communications consistency to navigate their way from page to page, from your real-world store to your site, from your cell phone strategies to your site, from your catalog to your site, and so on. In short, ensure that your consumer, at any point on your brand's communications continuum, knows without any doubt where to go and why to go there.

Another point: Consistency is a fundamental branding requirement in every facet of your interactions with the consumer. Consistency ensures synergy between the brand's message across all media channels. How consistent is your brand's Web site message (its voice and utterances) with the message it promulgates in the stores? How consistent is your television message with its radio exposure? With its coverage in catalogs? Can you claim that at least 50 percent of the message—its tone and its content—is consistent across media channels? If yes, you're on the right track.

3. Synergy among media

Are the many media channels you deploy in your branding strategy coalescing and cooperating harmoniously? How successfully does your strategy refer customers from your stores to the Web, from the Web to the cell phone, from the cell phone to the stores? Can you claim that at least 70 percent of your media channels are working consistently with each other in exposing your brand to the consumer—and vice versa?

4. Listening, learning and reacting

A priority very close to my heart is that a brand not only "talks" but also "listens," "learns," and "reacts." Brands that are able to listen to consumer information, learn from the data and react with the consumer intelligently will be winners (as I explain in Clicks, Bricks & Brands). Test your own brand. Assess how good you, as the brand-builder, are at listening to your consumers, capturing relevant information about them, learning from the data by mining the tons of information you gather and analyzing it—and by reflecting your findings in intelligent one-to-one dialogue with the consumer. If you assess your ability to build your brand in this responsive fashion at around 5 out of 10, your brand is well on track.

5. Tone of voice

The tone of voice your brand adopts reflects two things: Your ability to convey your brand's spirit and personality in written and verbal communication and your ability to pitch your communication style appropriately for your audience. Too much information can complicate the language, destroying its ability to define the brand and defusing its core message. Pick five of your site's pages at random. Now ask an independent person in your audience to read them. His task will be to tell you whether the five pages manage, individually, to target his consumer needs and whether he believes the five pages are consistent with each other. In this part of the test, I'm afraid you'll need a score of 100 percent—five out of five—to pass.

If you have any questions for Martin Lindstrom or the rest of the Global Brand Forum (GBF) faculty made up of Jack Trout, Faith Popcorn and David Aaker, just e-mail them to us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net and we'll make sure to forward them. For more info on the GBF visit www.globalbrandforum.org or for more info call Gina at 813-2732. God bless!

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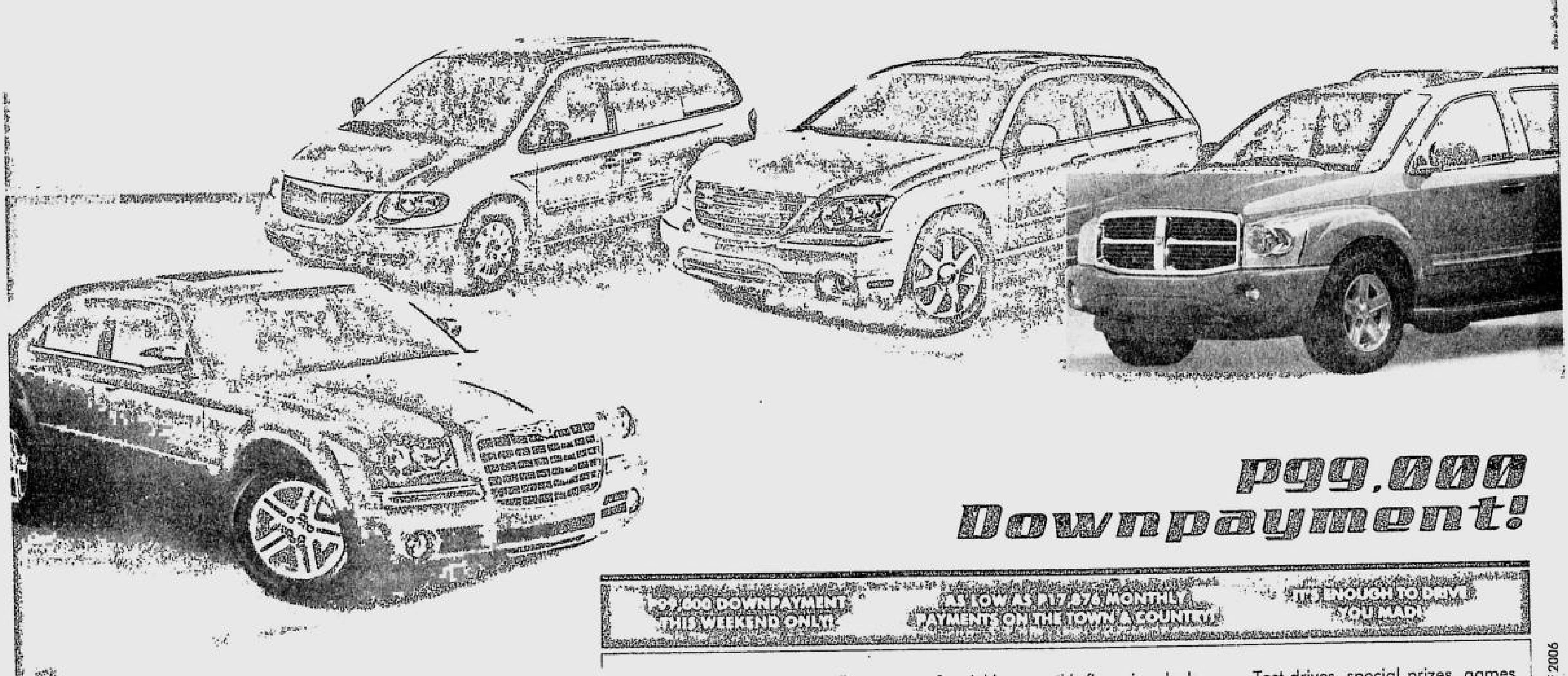

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GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Heroes of the hospitality industry receive Mabuhay Awards

By Raquel Gomez

Dream
Believe
Excel

MABUHAY AWARDS RELAUNCH 2006

HAVE YOU TAKEN NOTICE THE EXTRAORDINARY assistance extended to you by a waiter or a hotel staff? Have you felt happy with the food served to you in a hotel or restaurant? Have you experienced total delight and satisfaction in what you consider your best hotel and restaurant experience?

The people in the service sector responsible for your wonderful experience in a hotel or restaurant will have their day today as their efforts in delighting you as a customer will be recognized in Mabuhay Awards, a service excellence awards given to outstanding manager, supervisor and rank and file employee of a hotel and restaurant.

Four outstanding individuals working in a hotel and restaurant will be feted the Mabuhay Awards for best manager, best supervisor, best rank and file front of the house, and best rank and file heart of the house. Each winner will receive a cash prize of P25,000 and other prizes such as resort and hotel accommodations and gift certificates.

A Mabuhay Gold Award recognizing a hotelier or restaurateur who contributed in elevating the practices of the local hospitality industry to global standards will also be given. Center for Culinary Arts founder Susana Guerrero is the Mabuhay Gold Awardee 2006.

The Mabuhay Awards was established in 1996 by the Association of Human Resource Managers to motivate and encourage people working in the hospitality industry to maintain and continue offering world-class services to customers, according to Vic Alcuaz, chairman of the Mabuhay Awards committee.

"The association is very committed in this endeavor and we look forward to giving this prestigious award in the coming years," said Alcuaz, who is also the president of Hospitality Staff Philippines, Inc.

The Mabuhay Awards is an anticipated event in the hotel and restaurant industry and considered very prestigious. Winners of the award carry a special pin indicating that they are a Mabuhay Awardee, a distinction that he or she is a cut above the rest when it comes to service.

Forty-four individuals were nominated by their respective hotels and restaurants for the Mabuhay Awards. For each category, three judges, who are select and respectable members of the hospitality industry, review the dossier of the nominees. They also interview the nominees for the final judging.

"The AHRM, through the Mabuhay Awards, wants to give credit to where credit is due," said Alcuaz. "Wonderful things happen to these people who win the Mabuhay Awards. They get promotions. They get to work overseas, in cruise liners and international hotels. To be nominated by your hotel to the Mabuhay Awards brings prestige to even the ordinary employee."

In the Philippines, the hotel and restaurant industry contributes to about 11 percent of the economy. With this number, Alcuaz said the employment force in the hospitality industry is quite huge and he underscores the importance of this industry.

He added that while the country is still making the tourism market grow from the current 3-million-tourists-a-year-arrival, the hospitality sector is always on tip-top shape and ready for the expected tourism boom.

"This country has so many problems, particularly in infrastructure. But if we keep encouraging our Filipino hospitality staff to continue being good, hospitable, friendly, going the extra mile with the guests, then when the country's infrastructure for tourism is ready, then we're also ready to make our guests feel at home."

Alcuaz has high praises for the Filipino as hospitality staff. "A Filipino hospitality worker is the most wanted worker around the world. He differs in the sense that he's very friendly, anticipates the needs of a guest, can communicate in English. It is his attitude to be of service, to be of help and he does this with a smile always."

The Mabuhay Awards ceremonies and celebration at the Pan Pacific Hotel today will also gather key people and personalities in the hotel and restaurant industry.

Susana P. Guerrero
Mabuhay Gold Awardee 2006

Eighteen years ago, Susan Guerrero, the president of The Cravings Group, started her successful chain of restaurants when she and her eldest daughter, Badjie opened a modest bakeshop counter in Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City.

Good food, great ambiance, excellent service and the desire to continuously satisfy the customers' food cravings are the ingredients to the success the restaurant chain now enjoys.

Guerrero's desire to share her passion for cooking and to professionalize the culinary industry motivated her to put up the Center for Culinary Arts, Manila in 1996. Her vision and pioneering spirit in putting up the culinary school at a time when culinary arts studies were still unknown have allowed the mushrooming of professional culinary arts schools today.

As president of the CCA Manila, she is proud of CCA's graduates who now occupy top jobs in the best hotels here and abroad and are successful restaurant owners.

Guerrero has a heart for social responsibility. As a way of "giving back to the community," she has established the Culinary Education Foundation in [illegible].

CEF aims to bring culinary education to the less privileged members of society who cannot afford the cost of a culinary arts education. The foundation has funded the studies of several students in CCA's full Diploma Program, as well as brought grassroots culinary and entrepreneurial learning through the "Super Manang Program" and its "Mobile Kitchen Program."

Multi-awarded entrepreneur and corporate citizen, Guerrero is a visionary leader, an extraordinary achiever, and a shining example of this year's Mabuhay Awards theme of Dream. Believe. Excel.

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9. A specific mobile number can only be registered under one participant/sender. Subsequent entries from the same number will be credited under the name of the registered participant/sender.
10. Remember to KEEP your "To Send Form" as this will be asked before claiming the prize/s. Failure to present the "To Send Form" which contains the winning MTCN and transaction amount will forfeit the winner from claiming the prize.

HOW TO JOIN:

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12. For GLOBE and SUN, participants just text WUDOBLE <10 digit MTCN No> to 2966.
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13. For OTHER PROVIDERS, participants just text WUDOBLE <10 digit MTCN No> and send to 09188881400.
Example: WUDOBLE 1234567890 and send to 09188881400
14. Once sent, they will be asked to register for free to validate their entry. To register, participant just texts
    a. GLOBE / SUN
        i. WUDOBLE REG <NAME>/<CITY>/<LANDLINE>/<AGE>/<GENDER>/<WUCARD NUMBER> to 2966.
        Example: WUDOBLE REG Rex Fontanoza/Pasig/9100105/25/M/123456789
    b. OTHER Networks
        i. WUDOBLE REG <NAME>/<CITY>/<LANDLINE>/<AGE>/<GENDER>/<WUCARD NUMBER> to 09188881400.
        Example: WUDOBLE REG Rex Fontanoza/Pasig/9100105/25/M/123456789
15. Registration is done only once.
16. For succeeding entries, participants just text WUDOBLE <10 digit MTCN No.> to 2966 for GLOBE and SUN and to 09188881400 for other providers.
Example: GLOBE / SUN text WUDOBLE 2345678901 and send to 2966
: Other networks text WUDOBLE 2345678901 and send to 09188881400
17. Each successful message costs P2.50 for Globe and P2.00 for Sun Cellular subscribers.
18. Remember to KEEP your "To Send Form" as this will be asked before claiming the prize/s. Failure to present the "To Send Form" which contains the winning MTCN and transaction amount will forfeit the winner from claiming the prize.

Notification & Verification:

19. The winner will be notified through registered mail. The following must be presented by the winner for verification
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    b. Received registered mail.
    c. Their Western Union Gold Card (if Western Union Gold Card holder)

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Per DTI NCR Permit No. 2466 Series of 2006

MABUHAY AWARDS

2006 Nominees

Rank and File Front of the House

FELOVEMYR Y. TANHAY
Food & Beverage [illegible]
Pan Pacific Manila

EDWIN C. ARNAR
Room Attendant
Mandarin Oriental Manila

VICTOR T. HERVA
Room Attendant/Bellman
Victoria Court

RAMONA A. SORIANO
Telephone Operator
Dusit Hotel Nikko

ARNOLD S. DIZON
Waiter
Hyatt Regency Manila

CHRISTINE ANNE L. MANALO
Special Events Coordinator
Tagaytay Highlands
International Golf Club, Inc

MARK H. CASULLA
Room Steward/Waiter
Hotel Sogo

DJOANNE ADA D. BULURAN
Business Center & Reservation Agent
Island Cove Resort and Leisure Park

CAROLYN D. MONCADA
Beverage Attendant
Century Park Hotel

CRISTOBAL P. BONQUIN
[illegible] Maintenance Man
Victoria Court

FROILAN D. FLORENDO
Team Professional
Pan Pacific Manila

NOEL C. MONZON
General Services Technician
Island Cove Resort and Leisure Park

CECILIA C. BOHOL
Hand Finisher
Hyatt Regency Manila

GLENNIS T. NARCISO
Guest Services Agent
The Bellevue Manila

DIONISIO T. MACABUDBUD
Service Associate – Commis I
Makati Shangri-La Manila

BENILDO L. ANASTACIO
Service Associate – F&D
Traders Hotel Manila

ANDY D. LIM
Electrician
Dusit Hotel Nikko

GILBERT S. TAMALLANA
Service Associate – [illegible] Technician
Edsa Shangri-La Manila

DIANA I. CABANES
Cook
Hotel Philippine Plaza

MA. SABRINA L. BANZON
Guest Services Officer
Hyatt Hotel & Casino

LEANDRO C. NAVAL
Front Desk Clerk
Diamond Hotel Philippines

MARYGRACE F. TAMAYO
Service Associate – F&D
Edsa Shangri-La Manila

JOSEPH J. CABAUTAN
Bartender
Hotel Philippine Plaza

NELSON L. LEVERO
Engineering Technician
The Bellevue Manila

Supervisory

MA. ARLENE O. ROMERO
Service Leader – Housekeeping
Makati Shangri-La Manila

RESTITUTO C. PUNSALANG
Service Express Supervisor
Hotel Philippine Plaza

ZENDOR C. DELOS REYES
Assistant Manager
Pan Pacific Manila

FERNANDO L. ALCANTARA
Chief Steward
Island Cove Resort and Leisure Park

FERDINAND HONESTO A. DE LEON III
Sales Account Manager – Corporate
Century Park Hotel

CARLOS O. REJUSO
Headwaiter – F&B Banquet [illegible]
Mandarin Oriental Manila

SEBASTIAN GERARDO A. DIRON
Service Leader – Payroll
Edsa Shangri-La Manila

AMENIA T. OPIANA
Team Leader – Housekeeping
Hyatt Regency Manila

RANDY L. PAGUIRIGAN
Shift Manager
Victoria Court

MABUHAY AWARDS 2006 JUDGES:
Seated, from left: David Celdran, TV anchor, Business News Nightly ANC; Mila Abad, president, Prime Options; Fr. Edmund Nantes, Prior Provincial, Dominican Order of the Phil. and Ronald Holmes, executive vice president, La Salle Zobel. Standing, from left: Patrick Gregorio, chief marketing officer, Microtel Inns & Suites Phil. Corp.; Emerido De Guzman, senior partner, ACCRA Law and Roberto Zozobrano, chief operation officer, Ideaz. Not included in the picture: Melissa Po Artillaga, vice president General Admin, Equitable PCI Bank; Grace Mocas, sales and marketing manager, Phil. Tourism Authority; Bernard Bandonell, VP-corporate affairs, Sea Air Phil.; Susan Calo-Medina, TV host, Travel Time; Paul Lim-So, president and general manager, Holiday Tours Corp. and Jinggoy Malay.

MABUHAY AWARDS 2006 COMMITTEE:
Seated, from left: Angie Blanco, AHRM secretary; Nars Lim, president and CEO, Asia Pacific Projects; Vic Alcuaz, president and CEO, Hospitality Staff Philippines Inc.(HSPI) and Joyce Barcelona, director of People Innovation and Education, Pan Pacific Manila. Standing, from left: Rollie Estrada, DLSU-College of Saint Benilde; Josie Arriola, executive assistant manager, Mandarin Oriental Manila, Lettie Delarmente, dean-College of Hotel & Restaurant Management, DLSU-College of Saint Benilde and Danny Cabulay, dean-Business Management School, Far Eastern University.

Managerial

[illegible] C. AGRAZADA
Sales Manager
[illegible] Resort and Leisure Park

FERNANDO A. SANTIAGO
Housekeeping Manager
Hyatt Regency Manila

LORENA P. VALERIO
Sales & Marketing Manager
[illegible] Group of Hotels

AUGUSTUS CAESAR B. [illegible]
Regional Director of Security
Malaysia and Philippines
Makati Shangri-La Manila

[illegible]
Chef [illegible]
Century Park Hotel

[illegible]
Security Manager
The Bellevue Manila

CONCEPCION B. CORDERO
Pastry Chef
Dusit Hotel Nikko

[illegible]
Assistant [illegible] Manager
Edsa Shangri-La Manila

[illegible]
[illegible]
Pan Pacific Manila

[illegible]
[illegible]
Hotel Philippine Plaza

NOEL P. [illegible]
[illegible]
Traders Hotel Manila

ASSOCIATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGERS (AHRM) in the Hospitality Industry

Aristocrat Restaurant
AIM Conference Center
Asia Pacific College
Asia Pro Cooperative
Astoria Plaza
Andre Alip
Bayview Park Hotel
Bellevue Hotel
Camelot Hotel
Caylabne Resort
Century Park Hotel
Crowne Plaza Hotel
CHAMP Group of Companies
Critical Options
Discovery Suites
DLSU - College of Saint Benilde
Dusit Hotel Nikko
Edsa Shangri-la Hotel
East Bay Resort
El Nido Resort
Enderun Colleges
Far Eastern University
Fraser Place Manila
First Priority Manpower
Heritage Hotel
Hospitality Staff Philippines Inc. (HSPI)
Hotel Intercontinental Manila
Hotel La Corona
Hotel Rembrandt
Hyatt Regency Manila
Hyatt Hotel & Casino
Holiday Inn Galleria
Hotel Sogo
Hotel Philippine Plaza
IHMES Hotel School
Island Cove
Legend Hotel International
Linden Suites
LJC Restaurant
Macroasia Catering Services
Makati Prime Tower
Makati Shangri-la Hotel
Mandarin Oriental Manila
Manila Diamond Hotel
Manila Pavilion
Manila Polo Club
Max's Restaurant
Max Brenner
Most Institute
Oakwood Premier
Palms Country Club
Pan Cake House
Pan Pacific Hotel
Philippine Tourism Authority
Renaissance Makati Hotel
Richmonde Hotel
Rollie Estrada
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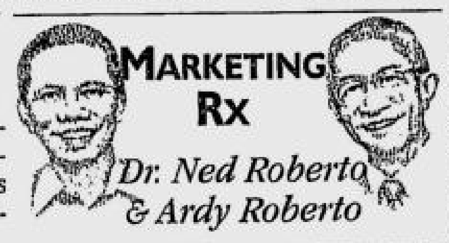
BUSINESS Friday

Brand health check - I



Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

WE CONTINUE TO HOST MARtin Lindstrom, the hottest and youngest brand guru today. Lindstrom, the best-selling author of Brand Sense, sits on several boards globally, and consults for companies like Disney, Mars, Pepsi, American Express, Mercedes-Benz, Reuters, McDonald's, Kellogg's, Yellow Pages and Microsoft. Lindstrom was the global COO for British Telecom/LookSmart, an executive at BBDO, the founder and CEO of BBDO Interactive Asia, and co-founder of BBDO Interactive Europe, both of which grew to become their region's largest Internet solution company. Lindstrom will be a featured speaker, along with brand gurus David Aaker, Jack Trout and Faith Popcorn, at the Global Brand Forum (www.globalbrandforum.org) in Singapore this Nov. 6 and 7.

Here's Lindstrom on checking your brand's online health.

As more and more media players surface, fewer and fewer consumer dollars are available to share among them. The result? Marketers make branding compromises in a desperate attempt to hit revenue targets.

It's wise at such times to recall the well-worn cliche and ask yourself: "Am I not seeing the forest for the trees?" It might be time to go on alert. I've written this article, and next week's, to help you see the forest—and to help you avoid committing brand suicide.

A lot of the things I'm about to say are obvious—you might even claim they're naive. But the fact is that I'm seeing more and more examples of brands whose builders appear to be systematically forgetting some fundamental brand-health issues and diluting their brands' position as a result.

In today's and next week's online-brand test, you'll have the chance to check out how well you've been concentrating on your brand. Today's test will ask you to check your site in five ways. Next week, the test adds five more. Be prepared. The questions are simple, but they are far from easy to solve.

1. Key message

According to all your stakeholders, your brand needs to communicate a host of things via its site. But tell me, is your core message clear to your Web site's audience? What three key messages should your site's visitors take away with them after having

BRAND/ B2-3

Wanted: Scheme to make Pinoys pay for insurance premiums

Making them pay for the first one is not hard, but not second. . .

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

INSURANCE EXECUTIVES have been talking to anyone who cared to listen about the importance of life insurance the past week in celebration of Insurance Consciousness Week.

What's bothering the industry, says the Philippine Life Insurance Association, is that Filipinos are spending on cellphones and mobile phone loads but not on ensuring a secure future for their loved ones.

PLIA president and First Guarantee Life Assurance Co. Inc. CEO Peter Coyiuto says that during a talk with an official of a phone company, he found out that there are 40 million SIM cards out in the market -- nearly half of the Philippine population.

And the total amount spent on mobile calls and SMS or text messaging a year is P135 billion.

Coyiuto says on the other hand, there are only four million insurance policies issued in the Philippine market.

The PLIA says the challenge is to get more Filipinos to buy insurance and to continue paying for it.

PLIA secretary and PruLife UK CEO Estelito Madrid with PLIA president and FirstLife president Peter Coyiuto

He says the industry sells about 350,000 to 400,000 new policies a year. But the net increase to the industry is only 165,000. This means about 185,000 to 235,000 Filipinos willingly lose the first payment or premium for their policy by simply not continuing to pay for their policies.

Coyiuto says Filipinos are often just "nahihiya" (embarrassed) when approached by friends or relatives selling insurance. What they do is pay only for the first premium to give in to the seller. They do not have any intention of continuing the policy.

"The first pay is made easily because there is a human face receiving it. The problem is how to collect the second premium," he says.

Coyiuto says the industry realizes part of its problem is collection of the premium. He recognizes that Filipinos, on their own, will not go out of their way to pay for their premium.

The industry is studying the money transfer through the mobile phone scheme to see if it can be used for the insurance industry. Coyiuto says they need to draw up a program that will allow the policy holders to pay for their premium with ease.

As expected the policy lapses are committed more by the C, D, markets. Ironically, the sector which needs it the most, Coyiuto says.

The local life insurance industry is composed of 34 companies, with about 28,409 licensed insurance agents.

The total premiums written in 2004 on ordinary life direct business, group life including variable life policies reached P44.76 billion compared to P39.09 billion income in 2003, an increase of 14.49 percent. On ordinary life direct business, the premiums amounted to P39.15 billion while group life accounted for P3.99 billion, averaging growth rates of 14.24 percent and 13.49 percent, respectively.

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LifeStyle

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) **or email us at** lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

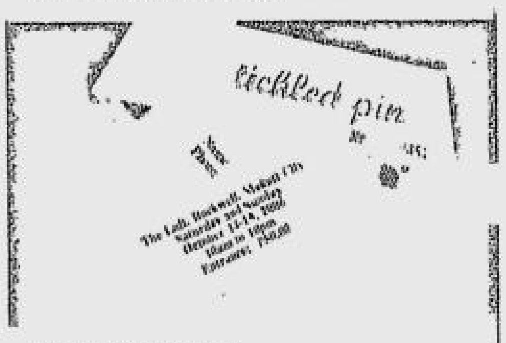
IN THIS ISSUE

- **Going loco** over Coco Banana /D1
- **Shine** and shimmer for your hair /E2

- **Metrowear report:** Three-fold runway bash /F2

Oh yes, you can

SHOP TILL YOU DROP this weekend without a tinge of guilt because it's all for a good cause, and get a good rest on Saturday night so you can wake up bright and early Sunday to walk for the same cause—the war against breast cancer. For enlightenment, sit in on a seminar sometime between the shopping and the walking. Let's turn the ugly stats—a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer every 3 minutes and a woman's life is lost every 14 minutes—into a swell of survivors.



Shopping spree

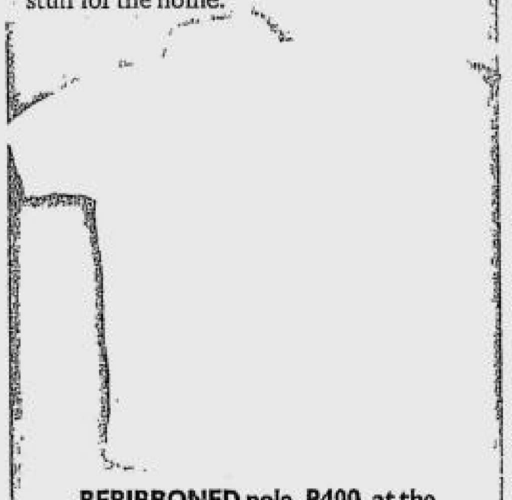
What: Tickled Pink Benefit Bazaar

Why: The I Can Serve Foundation needs funds to reach out to women with or at-risk for breast cancer

When: 10 a.m.-10 p.m. , Oct. 14-15

Where: The Loft, Rockwell, Makati City

Entrance fee of P50 welcomes you into a paradise of designer clothes and accessories that you can't buy at these prices elsewhere, plus pretty darn good stuff for the home.

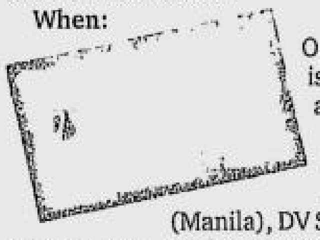


BERIBBONED polo, P400, at the Cause We Care booth, is available in an assortment of colors.

Walk the talk

What: Avon's Walk Against Breast Cancer

Why: Avon is known globally as the biggest corporate advocate for advancing access to care and finding a cure for breast cancer, with a focus on medically underserved women.



When: Oct. 22. Registration is at 6 a.m.

Where: SM Mall of Asia (Manila), DV Soria corner Tirso Nery Street (Cagayan de Oro) and Rizal Park (Bacolod)

Who: Women patients at the PGH Breast Care Center, Northern Mindanao Medical Center and the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital will benefit from your registration fee of P50.

First 750 walkers will get a pink scarf gift. For inquiries, visit any Avon branch in Metro Manila, Cagayan de Oro or Bacolod, or call the Avon help desk at 8642900 or 8642902.

Listening post

What: "Keep Abreast" Cancer Awareness Seminar

Why: Annual observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month by the Philippine Foundation for Breast Cancer Care Inc. (PFBCI) and Philippine Wacoal Corporation

When: Oct. 14, 2 p.m., and Oct 21 at 9 a.m.

Where: Asian Institute of Management in Makati (Oct. 14) and Philippine Stock Exchange in Ortigas (Oct. 21)

Admission to the seminars is free. Call 8841517 or e-mail philwacoal@wacoal.ph.

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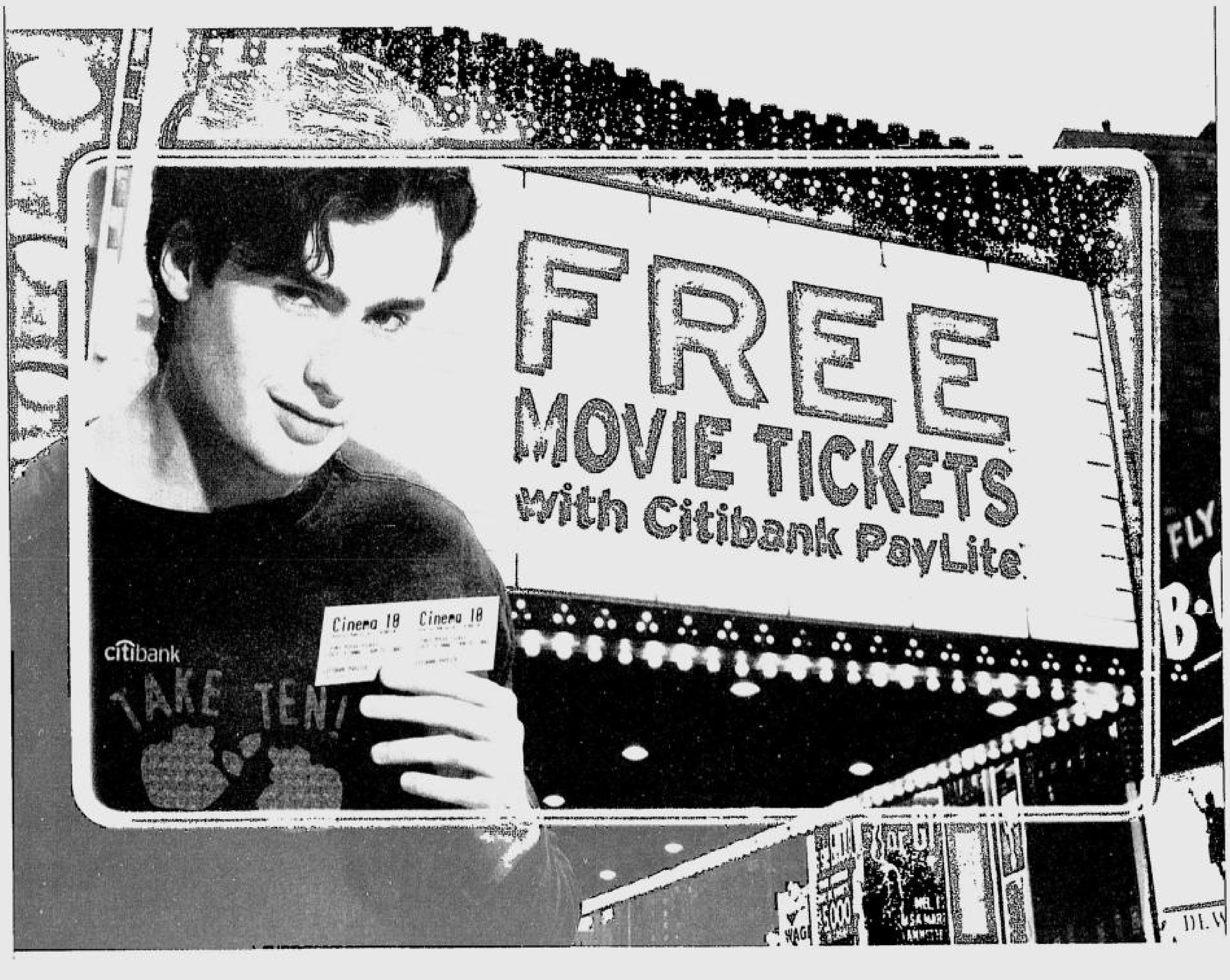

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Baby's got bag

Great news for fashionista moms—here's a line of diaper bags you wouldn't mind carrying

By Pam Pastor

WALLET. KEYS. Mobile phone. Makeup kit. These are essentials women carry with them every day.

But once a baby enters the picture, the load doubles—even triples. Milk. Baby bottles. Pacifiers. Diapers. Baby clothes. Baby wipes. Bibs. Rattle. The list goes on and on.

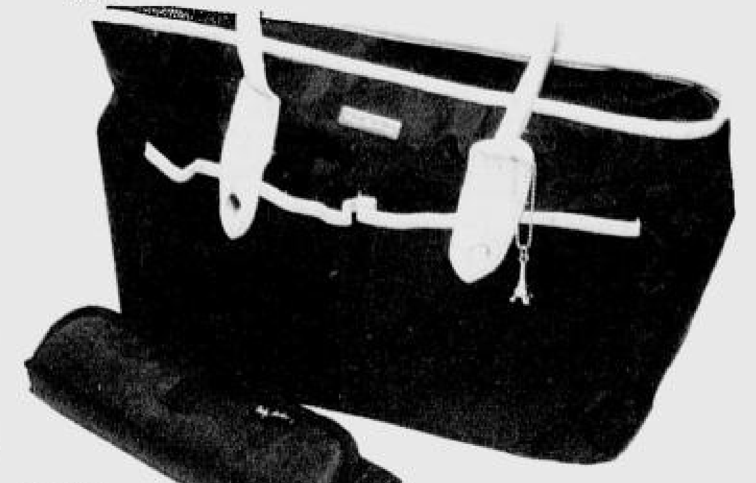
But there's good news for moms—and even dads. Thanks to Baby Couture, lugging around baby stuff is no longer synonymous to carrying bags printed with bears and balloons.

The idea stemmed from one mother's needs. Charlene Kang, owner of the Baby Couture line, had a difficult time looking for a bag when she first had a baby.

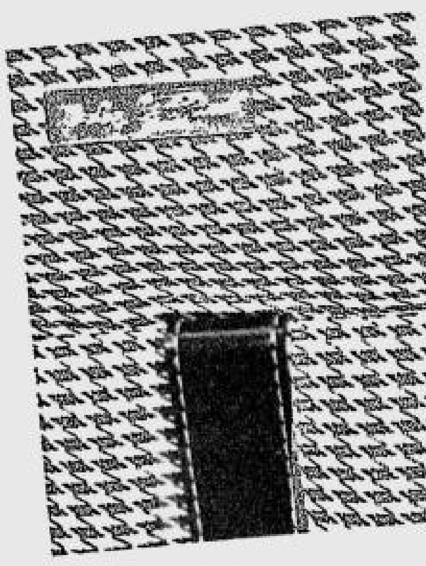
"I could not find a bag that I would personally want to carry. I ended up buying a diaper bag from an expensive overseas brand, which my husband protested about, at first," she says.

But when they started going out with their baby and her husband inevitably ended up carrying the bag, he became appreciative.

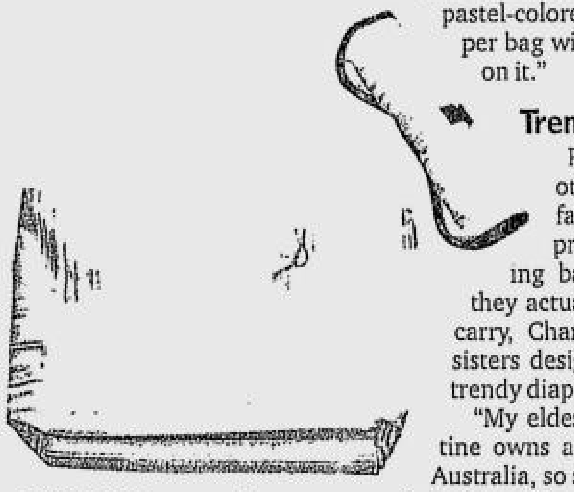
"He was quite thankful because even my husband did not want to carry the traditional pastel-colored, plastic diaper bag with baby prints on it."



A DOSE of sunshine. Even bag lovers without babies love Baby Couture.



BABY Couture brings a new generation of baby bags.



NEW TAKE on pastel. Goodbye balloon and bears!

Trendy-looking

Realizing that other mothers faced the same problem of finding baby bags that they actually wanted to carry, Charlene and her sisters designed a line of trendy diaper bags.

"My eldest sister Christine owns a pre-school in Australia, so she got a lot of help from the moms in her school, too, in terms of features and design."

The bags don't look like diaper bags at all.

"When we initially showed our bags to infant item buyers, some of them automatically said that we were in the wrong department because they thought they were fashion bags. But that was our main goal—to make diaper bags look trendy," says Charlene.

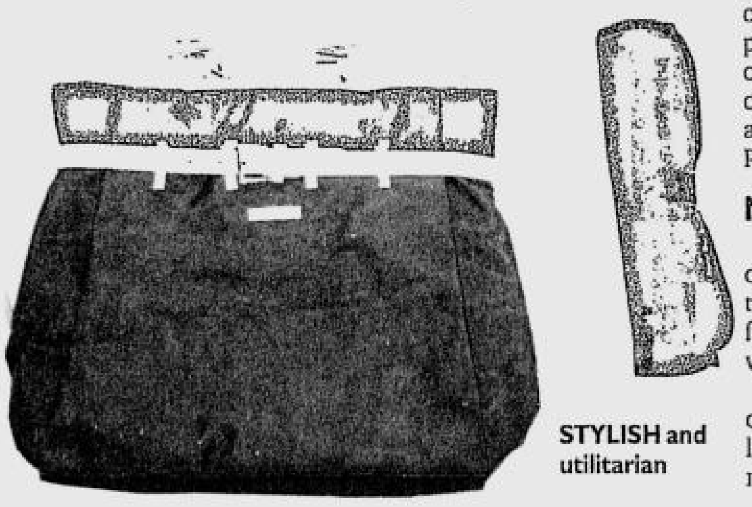
The bags come in different designs and color combinations. One tote can even be converted into a backpack. All of them are large enough for short out-of-town trips but are also compact enough for days in the city.

Combining fashion and function, the bags are loaded with features. Each one contains a removable and waterproof changing mat, a removable dry bag that can be used as an amenities bag or a wipes case, many pockets for easier organization, an internal key holder to keep keys or baby's pacifier handy, wide opening for quick access and a waterproof internal lining.

Each bag also features the exclusive Eiffel Tower Couture Bag Charm. Some bags have added features such as adjustable shoulder straps and double zippered tops for easy access.

The people behind Baby Couture exerted a conscious effort to make the line affordable, with the bags retailing from just P400-P700.

"Big names in the bag world like Louis Vuitton, Coach and Kate Spade already have their own diaper bags. However, their pricing is very much out of most of our budgets. We have priced our bags so that they are affordable to most moms here in the Philippines," says Charlene.



STYLISH and utilitarian

Mom fans

Although Baby Couture bags only became available last May, the brand has already created fans out of moms, some of whom buy more than one bag.

"They couldn't decide on just one design," says Charlene. Early bestsellers include the Sydney, Madeline and Hailey.

BABY loves black and white. This neutral-colored bag is easy to match with any mom's outfit.

Even people without babies have grown to love the bags. Women appreciate their functionality.

"Many use it as an everyday fashion bag because of all the convenient compartments. You don't have to fumble through your bag just to find something. Some customers also use the Madeline or Daphne bags as overnight bags for short trips or as carryon luggage for traveling."

People have even found uses for the baby stuff that go with the bags.

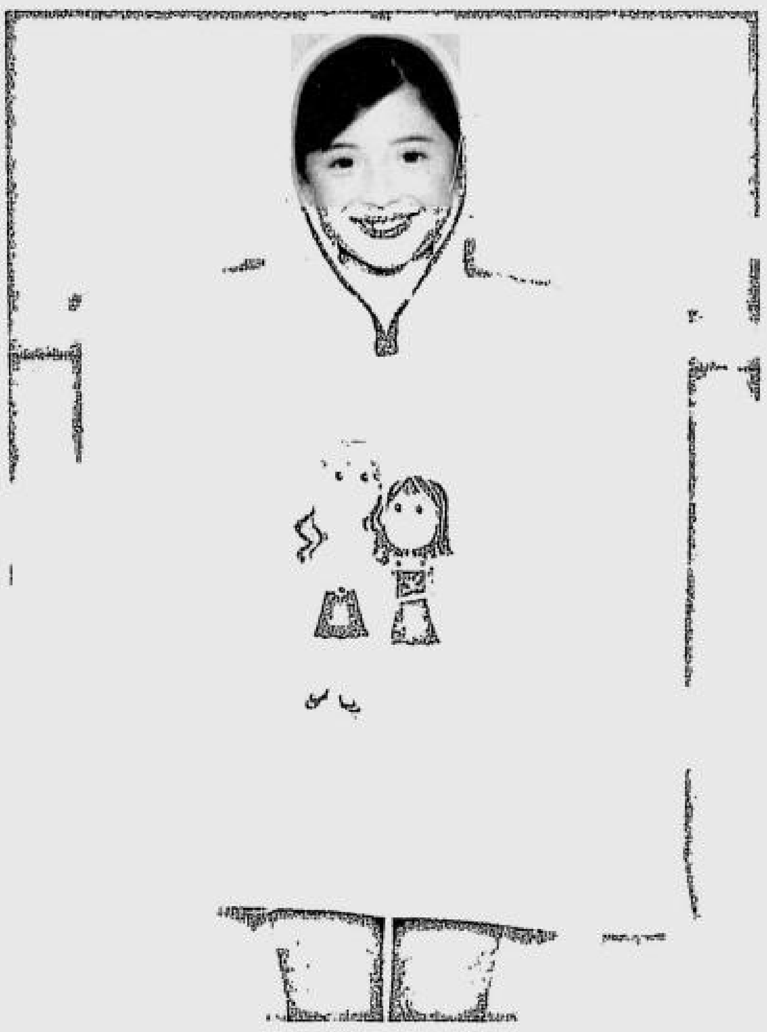
"University students order from us because they use the changing mat as their sitting mat on the grass in their campus," says Charlene. "Even I didn't even think of that as a marketing angle!"

The Baby Couture Team is just getting started. Following their mantra, "Never Too Young for Couture," they are currently designing a toddler collection. Fans of the brand should also look forward to their signature collection and their daddy collection.

They're fashionable, they're functional, they're affordable. Do you need any more reasons to say goodbye to the clowns and bunnies?

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

Baby Couture bags are available at Babyland, Rustans, Procreation and 4/F Shangri-La Plaza. Visit www.justcouture.net, call 5639396 or e-mail info @justcouture.net.



Everything nice

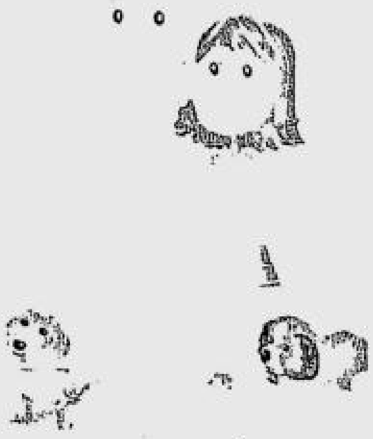
AVON RAISES THE FUN METER for young girls as it introduces two cool characters: sisters Sugar and Spice.

Active and adventurous girls will bond easily with 7-year-old Sugar, who loves cheerleading and dancing. She adores going to new places, meeting new friends and, of course, shopping. Meanwhile, young genius misses will find a new friend in Spice, a hip and witty 5-year-old girl. She loves to read books and make exciting new discoveries!

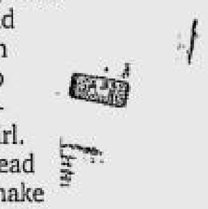
While their personalities differ, Sugar and Spice are the best of friends and share great times together wherever they go.

Avon's new Sugar & Spice collection includes the Sugar & Spice Poncho Towel, Multi-Dial Watch, Hair Fashion Wrap and the Activity Bag.

Available through the Avon Ladies. Call 864-AVON (2866) or e-mail helpdesk.ph@avon.com.

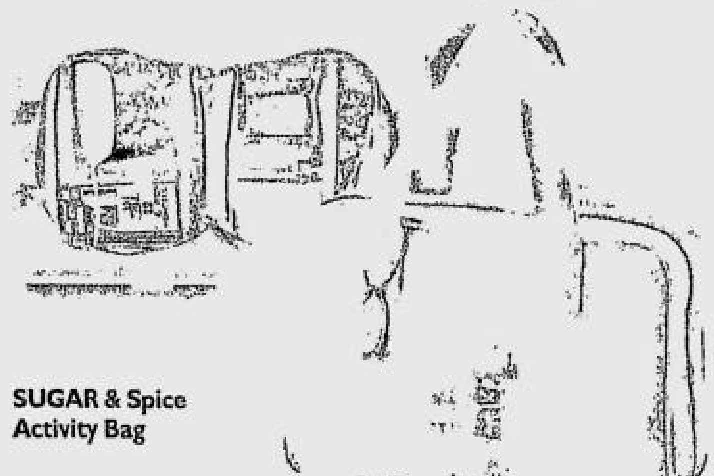


SISTERS Sugar and Spice



MULTI-DIAL watch

HAIR Fashion Wrap



SUGAR & Spice Activity Bag

Fall 2006 Childrenswear

Ralph Lauren Childrenswear introduces classic sophistication for Fall 2006. In the timeless tradition of Ralph Lauren, the latest collections for boys and girls are inspired by the All-American Collegiate, the modern flair of downtown Manhattan and the rustic sensibility of the great outdoors. Ralph Lauren Childrenswear is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at Rustan's Makati and Rustan's Tower.

NAVY top and gray heather basic drawstring fleece pants

LEGENDS of the Fall. Indian point bisque long sleeves printed Batiste ripstop Amelia blouse

---

Retail chain focuses on kids

A MONTH-LONG KIDS' fair called "Kids' Dream World," featuring an exciting array of toys, clothes, fun, prizes, tons of surprises and discounts of up to 50 percent, is going on at Robinson's Department Store.

Among the goodies on the block are toy laptops, cash registers and sketch boards for tech-savvy tykes; books and educational items for the inquisitive ones; shape sorters and blocks for builder-wannabes and kiddie crafters, and kitchen play sets and other role-play toys for little girls.

Young fashionistas, meanwhile, can all be glammed up with pretty blouses and sequined sandals, pearled tops and skirts, strappy shoes and kitten-heel slip-ons. Teeny gents will look dapper in collared shirts and long-sleeve polos matched with hip footwear.

Another bonus from RDS is the chance to buy a cute teddy bear for only P189.75 for a minimum P500 purchase of participating items from the Kids' Fair. You can also be one of 25 winners of ride-all-you-can passes to Enchanted Kingdom for two if you buy P500 worth of kids' apparel, accessories, shoes, bags and toys. Lastly, get a chance to win a three-day, two-night trip to Hong Kong Disneyland (with three persons you choose to go with you) and some pocket money, too.

"Kid's Dream World" is happening simultaneously in all Robinsons Department Store branches located in Robinsons Malls, Waltermart Malls, Tutuban Center, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang; Nepo Mall Pampanga and Dagupan, Pangasinan; Limketkai Mall, Cagayan de Oro City and its latest branch in Waltermart Gapan, Nueva Ecija.

Visit www.rds.com.ph. Watch out for the Kids' Dream World Catalog in the October issue of K Zone magazine.

BUCKLE motif is the perfect subtle accent for this pair of shades worn by Gionna.

ZANJOE sees the world in cool black and white through this pair of sporty shades with the Gucci logo detail near the temples.

SQUARE-SHAPED frames with contrasting white temple frames have casual yet sporty appeal.

CLASSIC square frames take on a new dimension with studded monogram details.

BLACK and yellow provide interesting contrast.

Eye on style

GUCCI'S LATEST EYEWEAR collection features the oversized frames so popular back in the '60s and '70s, as epitomized by iconic Jackie O. Today's styles, however, are more intricate and detailed, using strass, gold and other metallic embellishments, bolder colors such as blue, yellow and white, and chrome designs as well.

Model-actor Zanjoe Marudo and beauty queens 2005 Bb. Pilipinas Universe Gionna Cabrera and Bb. Pilipinas World Carlene Aguilar, along with top mannequins Raya Mananquil and Valerie de los Santos, are playing favorites with their Gucci shades of choice. With these celebrities' constant on-the-go lifestyle and schedules, these shades are the perfect accessory to take along anytime and anywhere.

With a wide range of styles to choose from, you're bound to find the right pair of Gucci shades to fit your lifestyle and flatter your face shape. Rimless styles serve to emphasize those dramatic cheekbones, while fair and *morena* skin tones will look just as great with any pair of shades.

When it comes to men's eyewear, oversized frames are a hot item, as are the sleeker versions of the classic aviator style. Zanjoe comes off looking every inch the model he is in his favorite aviator-style shades. Among his other favored looks are shades that wrap the eye and temple area in a comfortable fit, and the square-shaped frames that give off a boyish appeal.

Gucci shades are one of the hottest items now available at Rustan's Essenses Makati and Shangri-La Mall.

To make sure the Gucci eyewear you are purchasing is original, always look for the Safilo hologram tag attached to the eyewear's side. This offers you a sense of security the eyewear you have purchased is made by its official manufacturer, Safilo.

Gucci is distributed in the Philippines exclusively by Newtrends International Corp., and is also available in leading optical shops and selected department stores.

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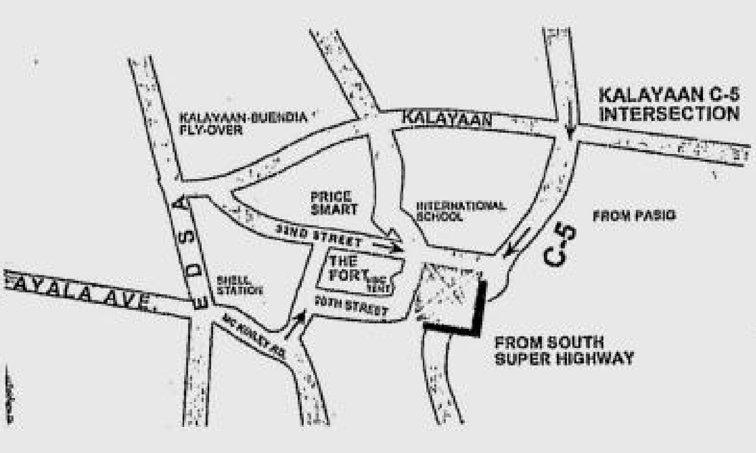

October 12-15	October 15	October 16-20	Until October 31	Oct. 13 - Nov. 2
Home Improvement Program at the Activity Center	Kiddie Fundays at the Playzone	Perfume sale at the Activity Center	Get a free Christmas Shopping Bag at the Market! Market! Concierge with every ₱500 purchase. See leaflets for more details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-384, Series of 2006	Bazaar! Bazaar! at the Central Plaza

MARKET! MARKET!
Bonifacio Global City

*Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-418, Series of 2006

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Masskara gets its own soundtrack

BACOLOD CITY WILL HOLD THE ANNUAL Masskara Festival Oct. 20-22.

This year, for the first time, the festival will feature an original beat by musician Gerry Grey, who wants to set a distinct sound to identify the festival. The Majika Masskara opens today. The festival is spearheaded by the Silver Masskara Festival Organization Inc., headed by Mayor Bing Leonardia. Masskara Festival director is Ely Francis Tanjanlangit.

GOINGS ON

AWARD RITES. Winners in the National Shell Art Competition will be awarded Oct. 18, 6:30 p.m., at 2/F Activity Center, Building A of SM Megamall.

The longest-running and most prestigious competition for the country's art students, the contest had 1,324 entries in four categories: oil/acrylic, watercolor, sculpture and digital fine arts.

Judges in the 39-year-old contest included artists Elmer Borlongan, Renato Habulan, Ral Arrogante, Ross Capili, Gus Albor, Justin Nuyda, Soler Santos, Fernando Sena; Angel Cacnio, Norberto Carating, Antipas Delotavo, Nemi Miranda; Junyee, Ramon Orlina, Reggie Yuson, Ramon Lerma; and Edwin Loyola, Dopy Doplon, Randy Kanapi and Mario Parial.

CHARACTER FEST. The annual Character Festival at Sta. Lucia East Department Store (SLEDS) and Planet Toys runs until Oct. 31. Get up to 50 percent discounts on selected items. A minimum P300 single-purchase receipt entitles shoppers to an invitation card-cum-entry pass to Kids' Day Out Oct. 15, 2 p.m.

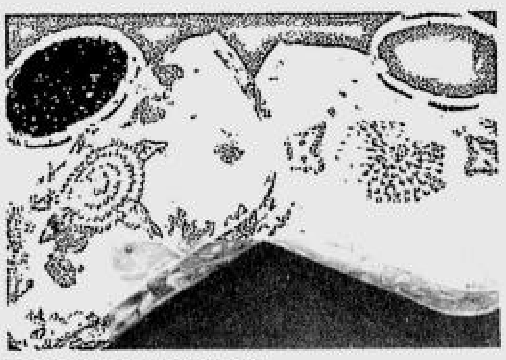
SERVICE. Sun Cellular has a more affordable IDD Top 10 service that lets you call relatives, friends, loved ones, and business associates in 10 destinations abroad—mainland United States, China, Hong Kong, Canada, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Guam and Macau—at a rate of only 10 cents per minute on your mobile.

Postpaid subscribers can avail of the service by dialing 200 on their Sun mobile phone or by visiting the nearest Sun shop. Prepaid subscribers may avail of the service by purchasing Sun IDD Top 10 call cards or by e-Pin purchase, SMS purchase, Xpress Load or accessing The Mall via their Sun cell phones. Call Sun's hotline number 3958000 or visit www.suncellular.com.ph.

TRAINING PROGRAMS. The San Juan de Dios Hospital is now accepting applicants for its accredited residency training programs on medicine, obstetrics-gynecology, pediatrics and surgery. Application forms are now available at the office of the medical director. Call 8334573.

SEMINARS. CFS Creative Training and Management will hold the following seminars "Basic Financial Analysis for Account Officers," 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Oct. 27; "Purchasing Management," 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Oct. 26; "Time Management," 9 a.m.-12 noon, Oct. 28; "Handling Stress and Pressure at Work," 1-5 p.m., Oct. 28. Call 8697960, 8232358, 8234825, or e-mail cfscreative@yahoo.com.ph.

MANAGEMENT SEMINAR. ProActive Center is offering Managing a Restaurant/Canteen Seminar-Workshop and Managing a Catering Business Workshop" Oct. 23-27 at ProActive Center, Unit 1203 Antel Global Corporate Center, Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas Complex, Pasig City. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 6673369/70 or 0915-4315375.



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Sherell Dynn R. Abot Stub No. 1110122 (Sta. Rosa Branch)
Carol A. Castro Stub No. 538354 (Naga Branch)
6 winners of Sharp 6.4ft Refrigerator
Lourdes M. Donos Stub No. [illegible] (Pioneer Branch)
Lilibeth Briones Stub No. [illegible] ([illegible] Branch)
Adolfo S. Dominguez Jr. Stub No. [illegible] (Metrowalk Branch)
Florentina Ruoin Stub No. [illegible] Tutuban Branch
Shara Mariel S. Geronimo Stub No. [illegible] (Metroeast Branch)
Randy M. Palmero Stub No. [illegible] (Malabon Branch)
*Color may vary from actual prize.
See Flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit #[illegible]. Series of 2006

LIFESTYLE

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2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

COCO crowd Efren Ocampo, Mike de la Rosa, Ernest Santiago and Rusty Lopez

Legs have become today's 'it' zone while Ernest Santiago and crowd relive the madness that was Coco Banana

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Going bananas over stockings and Coco

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

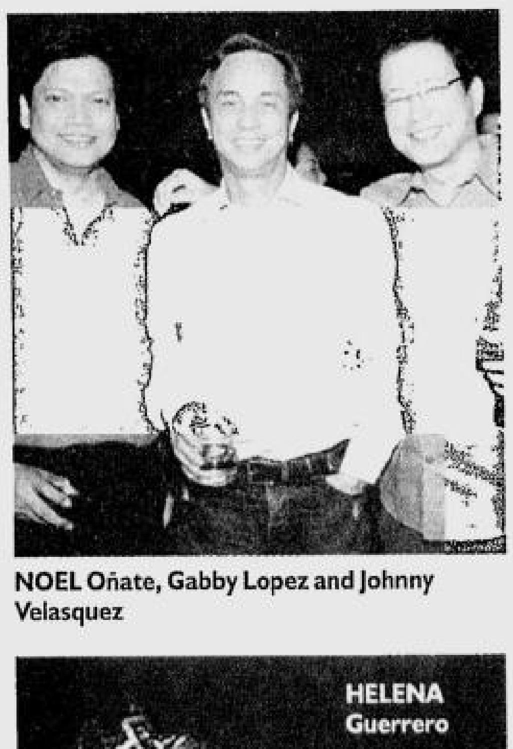
LAST WEEK I FOUND MYSELF DOING WHAT I hadn't done in years: rummaging through the closet for stockings to wear. Do you even remember the last time you wore one?

It's obvious that stockings and leggings are slithering themselves back into women's wardrobes. And, as **Frederick Peralta** told me at Metrowear last Monday as we watched **Lulu Tan-Gan**'s mini-skirted models glide down, their legs covered in striped stockings, today's designs are bewildering, just like in the '60s and '70s. They're net, laced, striped, dotted—name it, designs have it.

Leggings and stockings have become today's accessories because legs are the "it" body zone. Hemlines skim the knees, at least, or are raised several inches, to the upper thighs. From the mini, micro-mini to knee-length: that's today's sexy look.

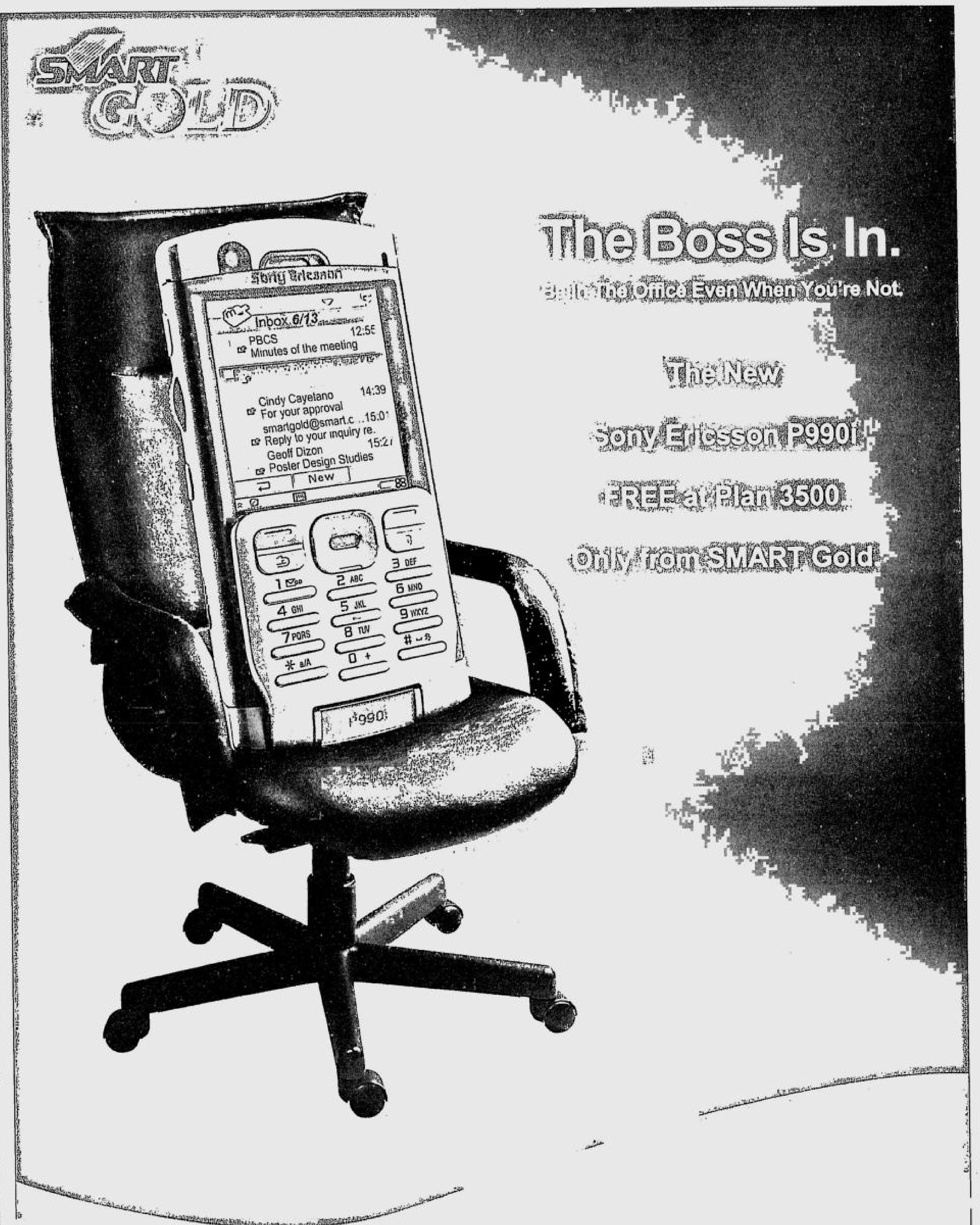
Please note, however, that this is dependent on age. While baring your knees (and even thighs) or not is discretionary, if you're 40-up, you really have no choice but to be discreet—especially as far as knee "dimples" are concerned.

GOING/ D3



NOEL Oñate, Gabby Lopez and Johnny Velasquez

HELENA Guerrero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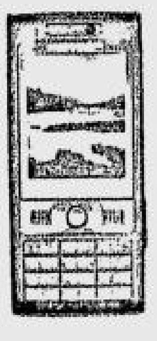
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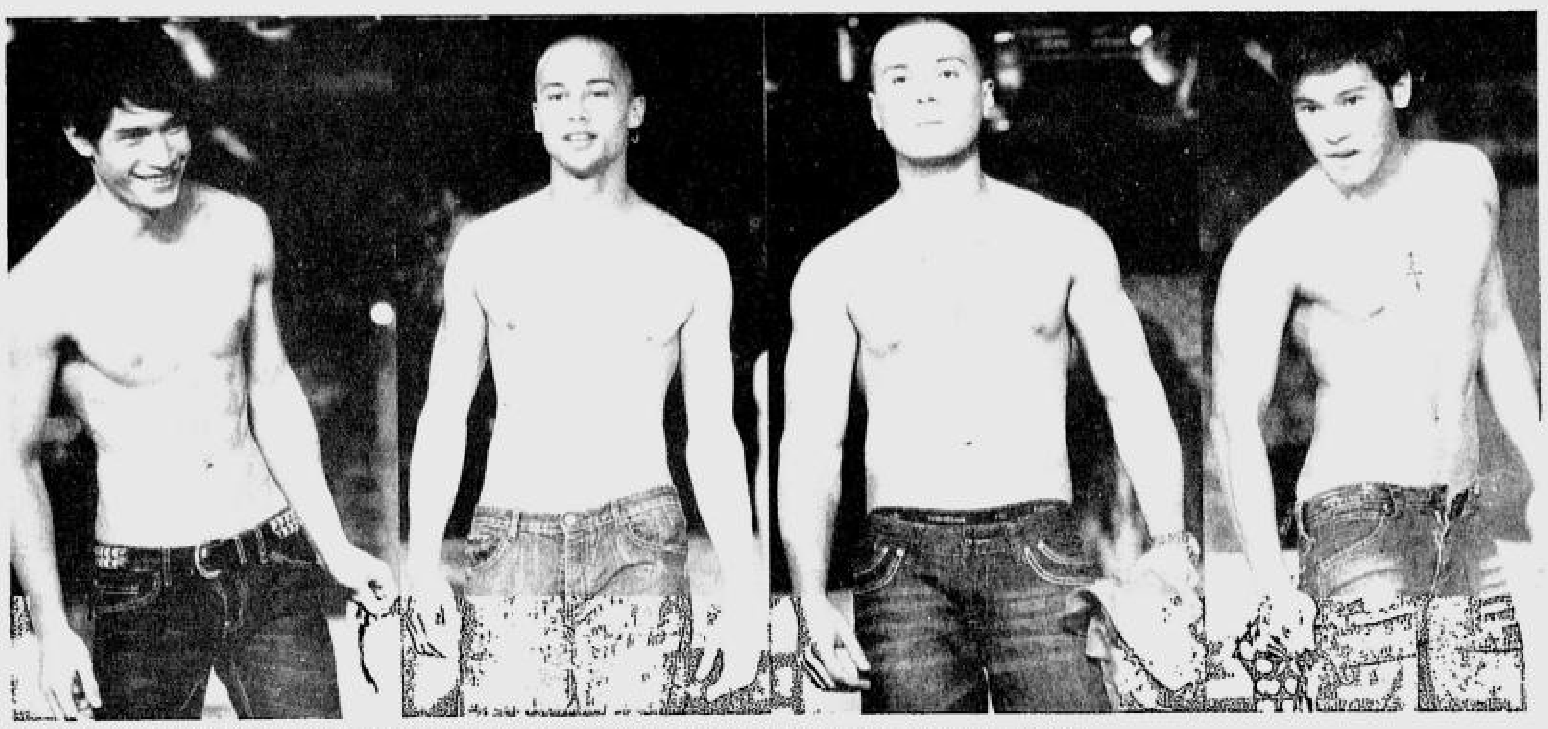

COSMOPOLITAN'S centerfold: Hunks Victor Basa, Will Devaughn, Polo Ravales and Enchong Dee

THE GALS with Cosmo's hot models who participated in the sexiest kiss game

COSMO'S fantastic host, gorgeous and articulate Menchu Antiqua

SEXY, adorable Gwen Garci

Screamfest at the bachelors' bash

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

MOI COULDN'T BELIEVE THE crowd, better the mob, dahlings, during that night of sheer extremes. From the extremely scorching fashion show to the extremely thrilling, to-die-for Cosmo centerfolds, it was an extremely fun Cosmopolitan Bachelor Bash 2006.

In the fab show, the shrieks and screams of the audience drowned out the emcees' voice. There were hot treats and hot activities, starting with the must-have cool Astring-O-sol Ice Extreme, co-presenter of the one-of-a-kind event which had a gargling booth where the mob refreshed "for an extremely cool breath."

Now, *palanggas*, it was definitely a great way to keep the party on a roll! And the Cosmo gals had a thrill posing for photo souvenirs and balloons with some of Cosmo's super-hot models at the Astring-O-sol photo booth.

The hottest moment of the event was the Astring-O-sol Ice Extreme's sexiest kiss games, in which three lucky ladies got a taste of Cosmo hunks. They kissed the guys in the parts they find the sexiest. *Naturellement*, they kissed the guys with the aid of Astring-O-sol.

The extremely hot night was made possible by the new Astring-O-sol Ice Extreme that "has a time-release antibacterial action, fighting morning breath, with an extreme lemon-lime flavor and intense cooling sensation," said hip, smart PR boy **GP Reyes**.

Après that, this year's Cosmo men paraded and struck sexy provocative poses which the mob couldn't get enough of. Mossimo Bikini Grand Prix titleholder **Jerome Ortiz** opened the parade, and it definitely rained men on the parade. In the finale, 60 hunks came out in white briefs, white Cosmo T-shirts and navy hats, and got soaking wet with rain on stage, sending the thousands of fun, fearless females screaming their lungs out.

The show was co-presented by Guess, Premiere Condoms, Dior Eyewear and Samsung, natch!

Nacionalistas' new home

The country's oldest and grandest political party, the Nacionalista Party, has found a new home, *palanggas*, at the second level of Starmall Edsa. It has its own conference area, lounge and pantry for meetings and forums all decked in minimalist décor. The opening of the new office is a run-up to the party's grand centennial in 2007.

At the formal inauguration officiated by Fr. **Patrick Casino** and popular Senate President **Manny Villar**, NP's top men attended such as Rep. **Lala Talino-Santos** of North Cotabato, Rep. **Eddie Gullas** of Cebu, Rep. **Anna Bondoc-Sagum** of Pampanga, and other die-hard Nacionalistas, *palanggas*.

"More than just responding to the needs of the community and particular groups, the party seeks to build the lives that essentially build the nation, leading development through the empowerment of individuals and elevating the quality of life," said Villar.

With its central theme, "Ang Bayan Higit sa Lahat," the Nacionalistas' centennial will be a memorable one, *palanggas*.

Mary Kay fans

Renowned beauty product Mary Kay gathered its many followers at the Mezze bar/resto for the launching of the reformulated TimeWise Miracle Set with Day Solution SPF 25 and Night Solution, which provides the skin awesome round-the-clock protection as well as renewal treatment.

The event featured awesome ultra-luxurious spa treatments using Mary Kay's premium products such as TimeWise Miracle Set, TimeWise Microdermabrasion, Satin Hands Pampering Set and Private Spa Collection, *naturellement*.

The happy invitees got cool free facials, hand spa, foot spa and massage from well-trained spa personnel. The guests with an attitude got fabulous glitter tattoos.

Mary Kay's hotshot executives such as general manager **Bernie Mercado**, marketing director **Reena Rodrigo**, and sales development and training director **Lynne Tribiño** were there in full beauty force to welcome us.

Après the yummy lunch, Mr. Charmer himself, bright and always smiling Bernie Mercado made a corporate presentation. "The company empowers women with unique opportunities for financial and personal growth," he said. "We have some of the best perks and benefits Mary Kay gives to women—educational programs, incentive trips, jewelry, the famous pink car."

Hey, check out the awesome new products from Mary Kay and experience the cool miracle of anti-aging! Call 8596211 or visit www.marykay.com.

CWC bazaar

The Catholic Women's Club is known for its charities and other social services, which are made possible by fundraising drives, such as the novel Casa Y Jardin bazaar.

Well, *palanggas*, through the Casa Y Jardin, the CWC is able to build three pavilions at the Elsie Gaches Village as well as a housing facility for the mentally handicapped.

This year's bazaar, *palanggas*, will be held Oct. 15 and 22, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Intercontinental. Special guest of honor is no less than **Lizzie Zobel**.

The club will sell its must-have 2006 Limited-Edition Plates by National Artist **Vicente Manansala**, no less. Also on sale are maid's uniforms sewn by housewives of a Gawad Kalinga housing project who where trained at dressmaking and provided sewing machines as part of the CWC's livelihood program. Not bad, huh!

"CWC member and benefactor **Bea Zobel** has once again lent her untiring support to this endeavor," said **Nene Leonor**.

Support the bazaar! For every item you buy from the sale, you can be assured you are helping our less fortunate brothers and sisters!

Tatler ball

Hey, *palanggas*, high-end chic magazine Philippine Tatler caps its historic and unprecedented fifth year tomorrow night via the talk-of-the-town Philippine Tatler Ball at Makati Shangri-La Hotel's Grand Rizal Ballroom. As in the past, the elegant ball is a strictly invitational event, dahlings.

I am sure that our town is buzzing with what people will be wearing, where they will be seated, and who the awardees will be this year. Well, *palanggas*, all will be told tomorrow! Catch you there at the ball of the year.

IN ASTRING-O-SOL Ice Extreme Sexiest Kiss Game, girls lick the chocolate syrup on the body of Cosmo hunks.

MARY KAY Phils. general manager Bernie Mercado gives his corporate presentation.

of anti-aging
TIMEWISE
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of

MEZZE'S Bobong Velez; Nancy Harel, president of Nancy Harel & Associates, Inc.; and MKP director for marketing Reena Rodrigo

CEBU'S hotshot news person Nelia Neri

of anti-aging
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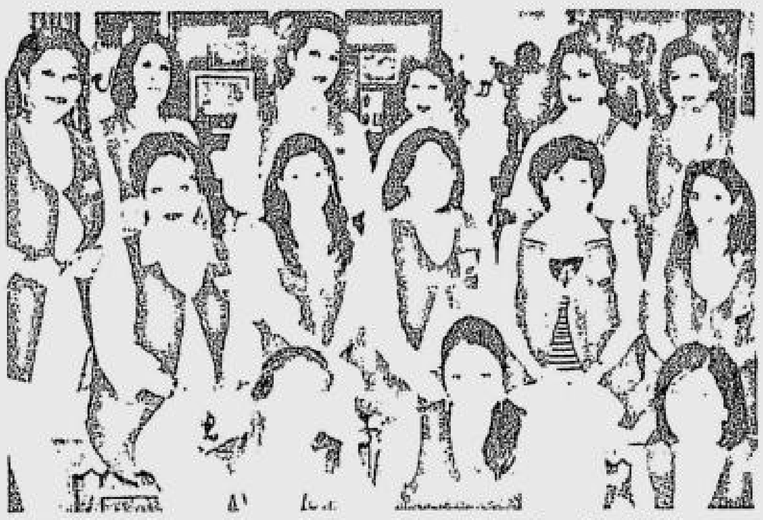
of ar

NANCY Harel PR ladies: Asia Gamo, Docker Cavestany and Bheng Loretizo, with Dante Corteza of Zamboanga

COSMO gals Michelle Onquit, Aiza de los Santos, Gracie Mariano and Kay Velasco

EXTREME models Michelle Barzoto and Daiana Menezes



CASA y Jardin Committee: (first row) members Servrine Miailhe, Carmen Roxas, Carol Yao; (second row) Lulu Castañeda, co-chair Marilen Elizalde, 2006 chair Nikki Valerio, president Linda Pastoral, co-chair Ane Preysler; (standing) members Mimi Valerio, Rose Hugo, Myrna Borromeo, Tess Castro, Nene Leonor and Shirley Uy

NP HOT lawyer Bert Bravo, laywer Pepe Oliveros and Ray Orosa

NP FIRST Lady Rep. Cynthia Villar

LAWYER Rhaegee Tamaña

JOJO Villar

REP. TIMMY Chipeco

REPRESENTATIVES Boying Remulla, Cavite Third District, and Ferj Biron, Iloilo Fourth District, listen to Rep. Janette Garin of Iloilo's First District.

SENATE President Manny Villar formally opens the new NP headquarters with Rep. Alan Cayetano, secretary general, NP Taguig/Pateros; former Ambassador Macario Laurel IV; Rep. Cata Figueroa, NP Second District Western Samar; Rep. Joey Hizon, NP Fifth District, Manila; (second row) Rep. Tony Serapio, NP Second District, Valenzuela; Rep. Bingbong Crisologo, NP First District, QC; Rep. Gilbert Remulla, spokesperson, NP Second District, Cavite; Rep. Timmy Chipeco, NP Second District, Laguna (partly hidden); Rep. TG Guingona, NP Second District, Bukidnon; and lawyer Ramon Maronilla

Going bananas over stockings and Coco

From page D1

Legs are everywhere. Leggings—cropped or down to the ankle—give you the edgier look, especially when worn underneath a short skirt or tunic. Only the brave soul with the perfect hips, abs, legs and thighs dares wear leggings alone, but this is one instance when bravery should be rare.

Stockings—net, striped, laced—serve as design statements in themselves. Just know the right dress or skirt to go with them. It's safe to choose the sheer type with dainty design. It shouldn't be hard to match with a dress. From the Tokyo of the '80s, I still have a pile of white Issey Miyake stockings in a myriad of monochromatic graphic designs—beautiful, edgy, but white and bought when I was barely a 100 lbs. Ancient history.

The question on your mind is, how do I pull off the look when I don't have long legs? (Filipinas aren't usually long-legged, unlike **Melanie Marquez**.) Just make sure your look from head to toe is fluid and continuous. Don't cut your torso into half by doing contrasting colors. (Only a reed-thin **Leica Carpo** dares wear a white Rajo Laurel micro-mini with black stockings.) Black dress goes with opaque leggings. Black and opaque are safe. Go monochromatic if you want to be safe. Now if you want to go '60s psychedelic, that's a different story—and a different set of nerves.

They went back

Ellen Barkin, actress and ex-trophy wife (of Revlon tycoon), told a Vogue interview: "If you were alive when it was there the first time, don't go back. Which is a good rule for life: Never go back!" Of course, she was talking of fashion, but her insight could apply as well to other things.

Apparently, the denizens of Coco Banana, the '70s and '80s landmark of Manila's nightlife and still unparalleled to this day, don't believe in Ellen's precept. They recently went back in droves—to Coco Banana, or at least a reenactment of it at Edsa Shangri-La—to mark Metro Society's anniversary.

The crowd was a dream-come-true for any pop-culture chronicler. The mix of characters was so interesting that it surprised even **Raul Manzano**, who had thought of reprising Coco Banana and tapped Coco creator, **Ernest Santiago**, for the revival. (But Raul's major feat that night was to pull **Gabby Lopez** up the stage—a once-in-a-blue-moon move by the industrialist—for the toast.)

There was Ernest kicking off the show of pop-idol impersonators with the theatrical drama that has become his trademark for two decades. He literally donned the stage backdrop of flaming red fabric and glided down the ballroom in it to signal the start of the show.

It was heartwarming to see him reunited with Coco regulars such as **Larrie Silva** (who just had his 60th birthday), **Rusty Lopez** (first time I ever saw him dance), **Bobby Caballero**, **Larry Leviste**, **Robert Castañeda** (who never even danced), **Mara Pardo de Tavera**, **Gemma Suzara**, **Cora Relova** (who never left Coco, it seems, in mind and spirit, after all these years), **Budji Layug** (who shed his austere blazer to rock away in his sleeveless shirt), **Oscar Atendido**, **Don Escudero** (who wore his original Coco Banana shirt—and fitted into it), **Bonjin Bolinao** and of course, **Rene Knecht**, who walked around the ballroom like the party guru of the '70s—with long silver locks and all.

A turbaned **Helena Guerrero** had her grand entrance on the dance floor, unfurling her printed dress. **Joey Panlilio**, watching from the sidelines, said, "But Coco was never this grand."

Indeed, Edsa Shang GM **Christopher Chia** (whose svelte wife **Christine** proved to be a good dancer), **Neil Rumbaoa** and resident manager **Vanessa Suatengco** spared nothing to see to that.

Catching up

A very excited **Rajo Laurel** said: "This is the closest I'd come to that era which I only heard about from my parents, so I'd never miss this." **Rhett Eala** could only watch in awe.

So Rajo burned the dance floor with his generation: Leica Carpo, **Malu Gamboa**, **Pepper Teehankee** (who noticed the plastic wrap on my Samsung even in the dark; such hawk eyes), and **Audrey Tan Zubiri** (younger than they, of course). Among the youngest must have been **Aimee Marcos**, who came with **Lisa Araneta Marcos** and **Tofer Vidal**.

Having Ernest, **Louie Y**, **Louie Cruz** (who, as expected, opened and closed the party with **Glenna Aquino**), **Tim Yap** (in blonde Afro and skinny pants)—all in one frame—was a paparazzi moment that captured Manila's nightlife across generations.

To dance or not, the fashion and lifestyle industry was there—**Jackie Aquino**, **Mike de la Rosa** (saw him dance for the first time also), **Tonichi Nocom**, **Efren Ocampo** (too coy to dance), **Randy Ortiz**, **Chito Vijandre**, **Ricky Toledo**, **Gigi Mabanta** (danced and watched on the front row), **Mario Katigbak** (everyone's favorite dance partner but whom Bonjin tried to monopolize), **Malu Francisco**, **Mutya Crisostomo**, Mega's **Lorraine Belmonte**, **Liza Ilarde Cuenca** (best dressed as usual, in a red coat) with hubby **Elbert**, **JR Isaac**, **Jenni Epperson**, **Bea Ledesma**, **Mari Litonjua** whose Motorola sponsored the event even if Coco was long before Mari's era, Shu Uemura's **Tina Tinio**, Landco's **Abby** and **Maricar Xeres Burgos**.

Arthritic generation

Early on, I asked frantic, "Why aren't the Coco Banana people

GOING/D4

JACKIE Aquino and Tonichi Nocom (left); Lia Bernardo, Maricris Zobel, Raul Manzano and Karen Santos (right)

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Going bananas over stockings and Coco

LOUIE Ysmael and Ernest Santiago

From page D3

dancing?" A smart aleck replied, "They're all arthritic already."

Wrong. The dancing heated up as the night wore on—thanks to the sounds of **Tinee de Guzman** who must have the best stacks of disco music in Manila. He was using 45rpm and vinyl LPs on turntables. Tinee was tapped by Metro Society editor in chief **Lia Bernardo** and **Marichelle Ligon**. People actually stayed if only to listen to the disco of the '70s and '80s.

They danced and listened —**Maurice Arcache, Joe** and **Vicky Zubiri** (for a change, I heard, it was the former dragging the latter to the party), **Jojo Zabarte, Nini Licaros, Frannie Jacinto, Mary Grace Katigbak, Renato** and **Tokie (Tantoco) Enriquez, Maricris Zobel, Sigalit** and **Sinai Djemal, Ito Feliciano, Anton Barretto, Marissa Lopa, Johnny Velasquez, Karen Santos, Evelyn Lim, Anna Angara, Jovy** and **Carla Cruz, Benny** and **Olivia Limpe-Aw, Bledes** and **Veanna Fores. Margarita Fores** tried to catch up—at 2 a.m. And so did **Leo Valdez** who came in red Roberto Cavalli pants.

They danced, listened and annotated: **Andrew Gan, Jay Cuunjieng** and **Jonathan Matti.** But all through the night, it was **Monchet Olives** who kept his corporate mien.

For the record, it's the post-Coco journalists—**Alya Honasan, Carlo Tadiar, James Ong, Joseph Uy**—who didn't leave the dance floor simply because they must have been too drunk to walk.

Question of the night: Where was Coco Banana's original—**Josie Darang?** She had a change of lifestyle.

LOUIE Cruz, Robert Castañeda and Larrie Silva

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LIFESTYLE

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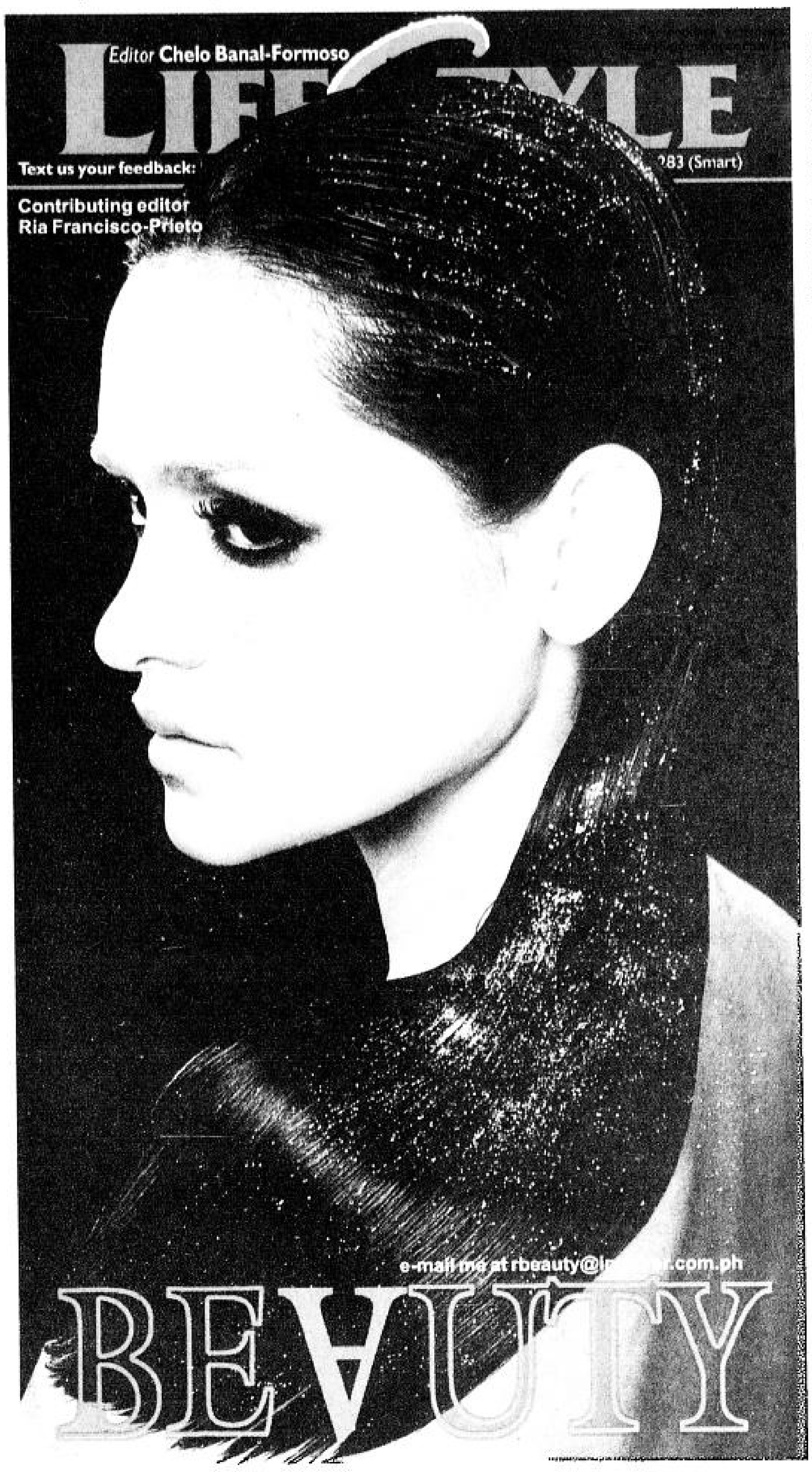
Ria Francisco-Prieto



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OCTOBER 14
Starmall Las Piñas Open Parking Area
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OCTOBER 20
Metropolis Star Alabang, Open Parking Area
The south's hottest party with maximum music from the country's biggest artists! Party starts at 6PM.

OCTOBER 28
Simultaneous at the open grounds of Starmall EDSA-Shaw and Starmall Las Piñas
Don't miss this one of a kind closing celebration that only Starmall and SMB could put together! Party starts at 6PM.

MALL EVENTS THIS OCTOBER

STARMALL LAS PINAS
872-5249
Oct. 14 Oktoberfest, open parking, 6pm
Oct. 24 Garden Club Anniversary, 2/L, 7pm
Oct. 28 Psychic Fest @ The Strip, 4pm
Oct. 29 Halloween Trick or Treat, 10am
Mondays, Comedy Nights @ The Strip, 8pm
Tuesdays, Ballroom Nights @ The Hub, 7pm
Wednesdays, Live Bands @ The Strip, 7pm
Fridays, Live Bands @ Mark's Bar, 9pm
Saturdays, Storytelling @ Books for Less, 4pm
Sundays, Aero Clinic @ Myspa

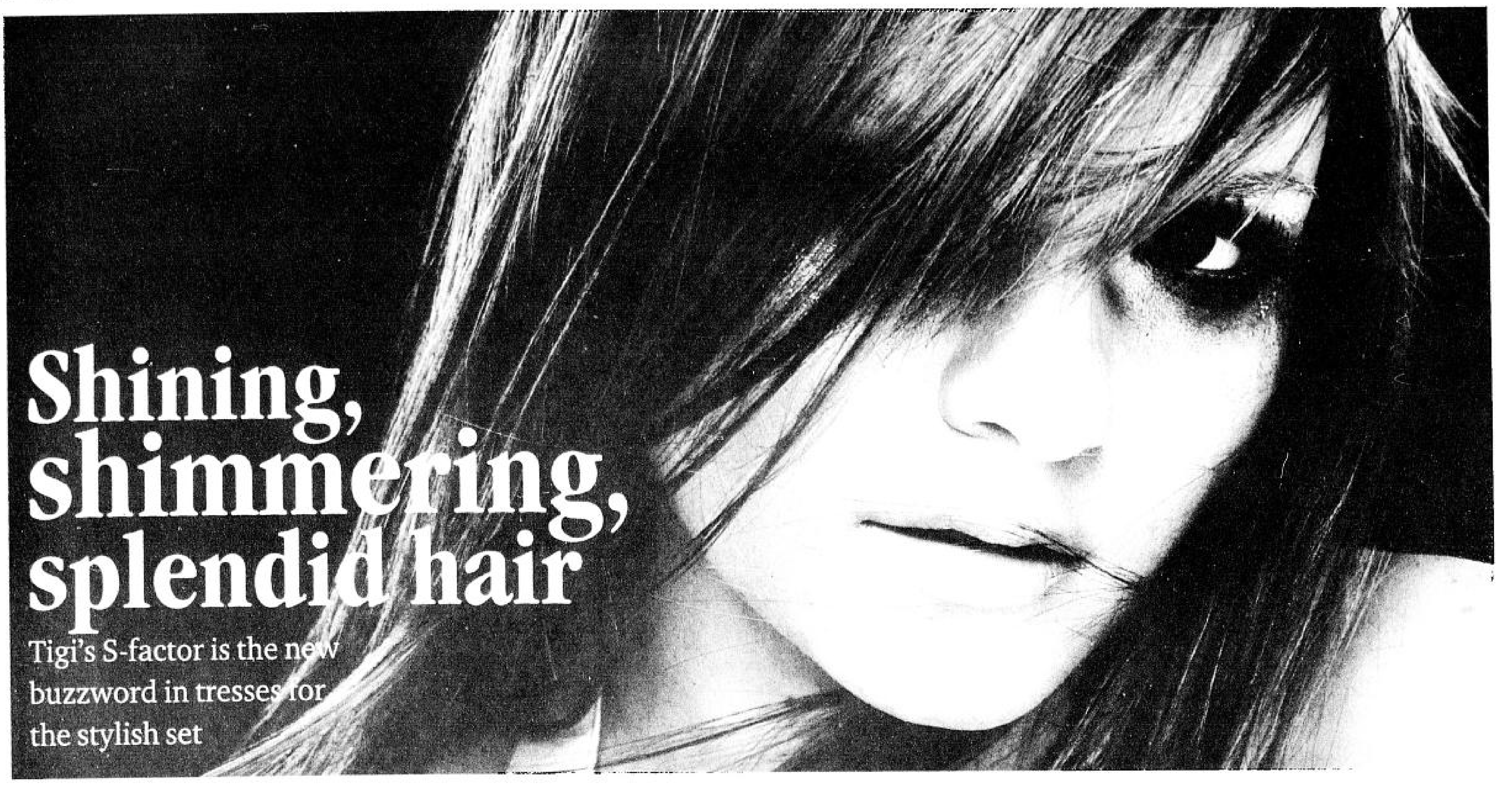
STARMALL EDSA-SHAW
718-1986
Oct. 14 Center for Pop Mall Show 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 15 Raging Divas, 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 21 [illegible] Cup Table Tennis Mall Tour 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 22 [illegible] Album Tour 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 27 Kids Fun Day Activity 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 28 Freestyle Album Tour, 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 29 Kids Fun Day Activity, Halloween Trick or Treat, 2/L, 1pm
Oct. 30 Psychic Fest, 2/L, 1pm
Tuesdays, Comedy Nights @ Cuba Libre, 8pm
Fridays & Saturdays, Live Bands @ Cuba Libre, 9pm
Sundays, Acoustic Nights @ Cuba Libre, 8pm

METROPOLIS STAR ALABANG
850-[illegible]
Oct. 14 Jamming Club [illegible], 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 15 David [illegible] Mall Tour, 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 21 Food Demo by Spices [illegible] House, 2/L, 2pm
Oct. 22 [illegible] Raymundo Mall Tour 2/L, 4pm
Oct. 26 3rd Quarter PESO Mega Job Fair 2/L, 10am
Oct. 28 Martial Arts Demo, 2/L, 2pm
Oct. 29 Halloween Trick or Treat @ Mall, 2/L, 3pm
Oct. 29 Psychic Fest, 2/L, 1pm
Mondays, Tuesdays, & Wednesdays, Live Bands, 2/L, 8pm
Thursdays, Comedy Nights, 2/L, 8pm

starmall EDSA SHAW

METROPOLIS ALABANG Star

starmall LAS PIÑAS



Shining, shimmering, splendid hair

Tigi's S-factor is the new buzzword in tresses for the stylish set

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

SOME PEOPLE ARE blessed with the hair they want. I would like to think, though, that most of us wish we had "better hair."

To me, that means straight hair. And to my friend who has beautiful straight hair that looks like it was blow-dried, it means wavy hair.

But for whatever it's worth, with the technology available to us nowadays, it's easy to get the kind of hairstyle we want.

Here is one product that will help you get straight hair.

The S-factor

What is S-factor?

Well, it's the new buzzword in hair for the stylish set, as well as the latest line from acclaimed hair product brand Tigi.

Jeoff Moran of Emphasis Salon and the beautiful Rocio Lobregat bring to life stunning looks that can truly make heads turn.

Glow! "I always want the hair to have movement and shine," says Moran.

To achieve this look, he recommends using styling tools that cater to one's unique hair type and texture.

"And of course, getting a regular trim is important."

In between haircuts, Moran recommends S-factor's Smoothing Shampoo and Smoothing Conditioner as the quintessential products for maintaining proper rejuvenation and hydration.

Stay in shape! Keep your hair in shape, that is. Moran recommends regular in-salon treatments.

"A regular conditioning treatment is essential for manageability. With the S-factor treatment, I notice an instant dramatic change! The dullness of the hair is replaced by shine and suppleness. Hair has life again."

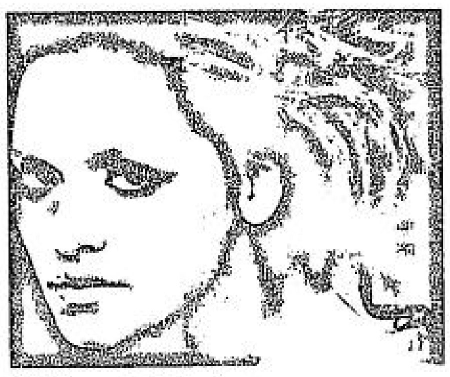
Lobregat's healthy mane is a testament.

"S-factor's Serious Conditioner is great for keeping my hair in top shape despite the pollution and humidity. It makes my hair shiny and soft!"

Serious Conditioner is a potent combination of sunflower seed oil and silk for extreme moisture and split ends minimization. Plus, it comes in a sweet, strawberry peppermint fragrance, so there's none of those strong post-treatment smells to worry about.

Sizzle in style! Lobregat admits, "Since I am the wash-and-wear type, I choose simple haircuts that will permit me to do just that."

Regardless of length or cut, the important thing is to make the look work for you. S-factor has a range of products to help you enhance your tresses. For movable hold, the melon-scented Creamy Molding Wax is your best bet. To keep your unique style in place, use Chic Shine, a long-lasting hair spray in green apple and kiwi fragrance.



KEEP your hair in shape.

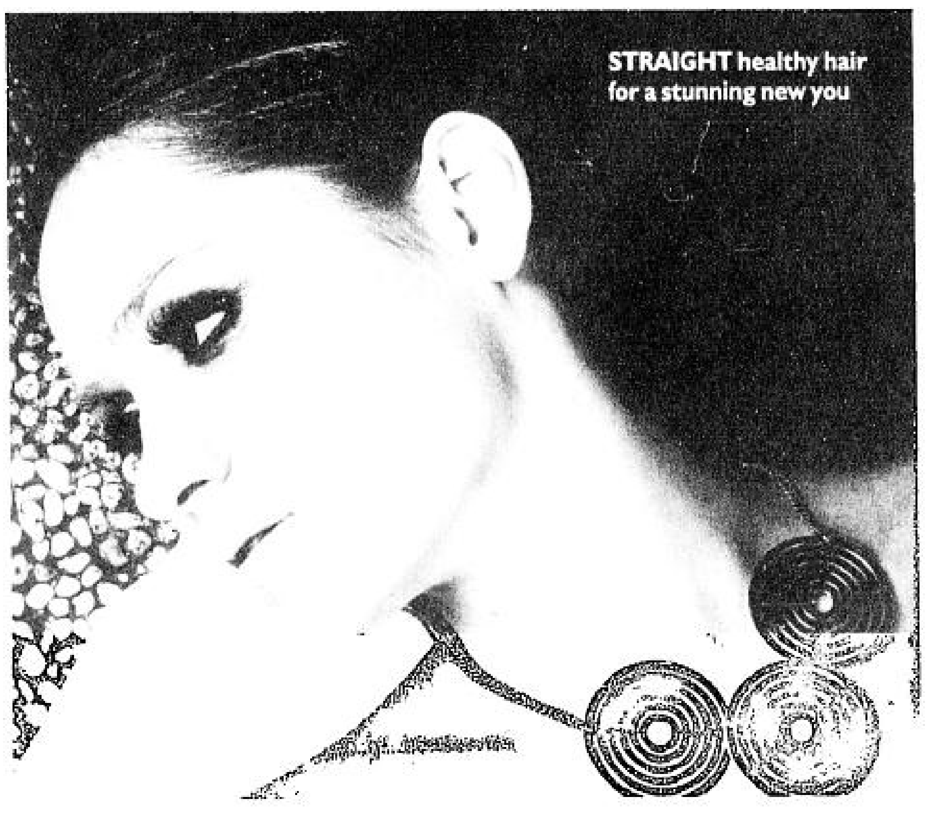
"Products shouldn't weigh the hair down or make it look and feel like there's too much product in it," says Moran.

Straighten up! Achieve straight styles with Seriously Straight, a pear-scented straightener that also helps repair cuticle damage and protect against color fading. Plus, it'll protect your hair against heat damage from hair dryers and irons.

Smell sensational! For Moran, who has been working with Tigi products for years, smelling great is as important as looking great.

"S-factor is like nothing I've tried before! The products truly deliver the promise of soft, flowing hair; plus, they smell great!" adds Lobregat.

Smoothen! Frizz is one of the biggest hair dilemmas. But with S-factor's Smoothing Lusterizer, a strawberry-scented defrizzer and tamer, and Dream Drops, an infusion of jojoba oil, avocado oil and rice protein, which also helps control frizz and add shine, users can have the benefit of smooth hair every day.



STRAIGHT healthy hair for a stunning new you

Moran's favorite product is the Smoothing Lusterizer. "It leaves a shimmering effect," he says.

Stay superb! "I find it better to use the whole product line to get the desired superb effect!" Moran says.

This is because S-factor works like a system. While every product in the line is equipped with an individual function and can stand on its own, when used together, they help achieve even better results. Plus, the products can be layered without slowing down the drying time of the hair!

S-factor is rapidly becoming a favorite among Manila's well-renowned hairdressers. Just ask Emphasis Salon's Teng Roma, who says, "I am very happy with the arrival of S-factor in the haircare business. This is a star product and that's why we use it in our salon."

Emphasis Salon is at the Rockwell Information Center, Estrella St., Makati. Call 6870424.

Glamorous seduction

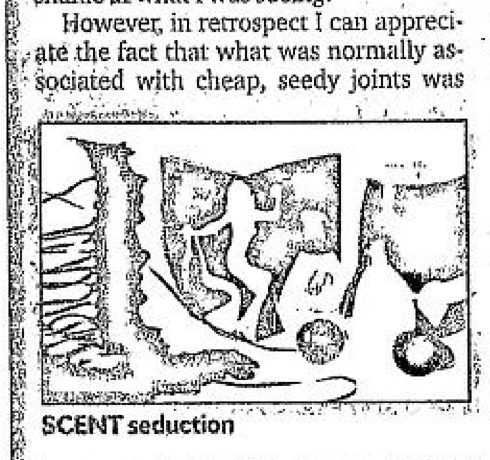
By Carla Sibal
Contributor

I WAS WALKING ALONG THE Boulevard Hausmann one sunny day in Paris when I was confronted by a mesmerizing lineup of window displays. There standing before me was a life-size showcase of a fascinating gamut of products the brand Agent Provocateur had on offer.

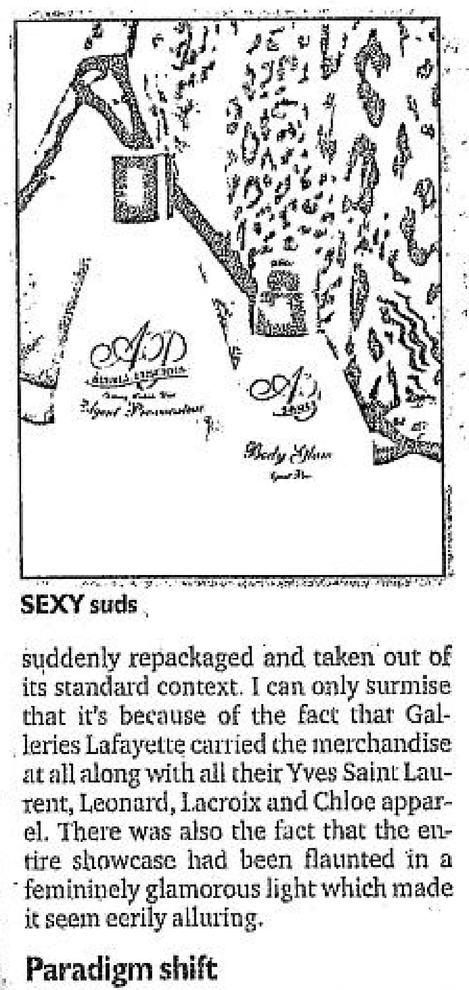
The whole length of the great Parisian shopping mecca known as Galeries Lafayette offered a barrage of one-block-long windows of seductive boudoir apparel.

The moment presented itself in a surreal light as I stood on a bustling sidewalk at the height of day and witnessed a dark sensuous play of bedroom fetish apparel. Despite the flagrant display, Parisians hurriedly walked by seemingly oblivious to the entire scene. Of course, being in the city where romance was born, I couldn't blame them for their stoic interest.

I, on the other hand, was lulled in disbelief and feeling a voyeuristic sense of shame at what I was seeing.



SCENT seduction



SEXY suds

However, in retrospect I can appreciate the fact that what was normally associated with cheap, seedy joints was suddenly repackaged and taken out of its standard context. I can only surmise that it's because of the fact that Galleries Lafayette carried the merchandise at all along with all their Yves Saint Laurent, Leonard, Lacroix and Chloe apparel. There was also the fact that the entire showcase had been flaunted in a femininely glamorous light which made it seem eerily alluring.

Paradigm shift

It occurred to me that in this day and age, it's no longer necessary to view seductive apparel in a negative light. That it doesn't need to be compartmentalized in that Fredericks of Hollywood mold. Suddenly, there were other options. Although I didn't have the luxury of time to peruse the merchandise inside the store, the experience had left its imprint firmly on my mind.

After this dawned on me, I started becoming aware of the increasing trend in feminine antics encapsulated and modeled by striptease queen and MAC Cosmetics' Viva Glam endorser Dita von Teese. Recently wed to Gothic personality Marilyn Manson, her retro-inspired '40s boudoir garb remains constant, and foreign magazines consistently refer to her as one of 21st century's most stylish women.

Italian brand Moschino even included her as one of their models during their last catwalk show in Milan. I wanted to cheer her for championing the voluptuous figure—enough with Nicole Richie and the whole Zoe-bot look already.

AP in Hong Kong

My second experience with Agent Provocateur was inside its free-standing boutique nestled within the IFC mall's Lane Crawford department store. This time, I made it a point to walk in and view the merchandise.

Intricately boned corsets, chantilly lace undies with garter belts, sleek kitten-heel satin slippers and luxurious lingerie in the most feminine and wicked fabrics were all tastefully presented. This inner sanctum to glamorous femininity was done in a witty presentation in pink and black with a soft warm light making you feel like you could linger in the store all day. It was in this context then, that I happened to test Agent Provocateur's Eau de Parfum.

Power in a scent

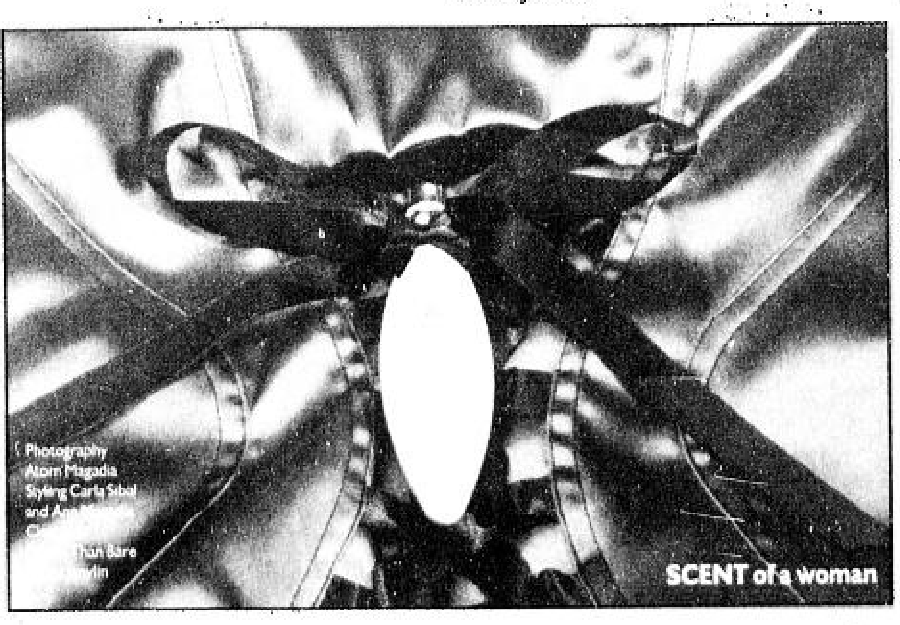
With the trend in perfumes now veering away from androgynous, light and powdery scents, Agent Provocateur's Eau de Parfum presents itself in one bewitching, heady experience. Developed by the founders of this London-based brand Joseph Corre and Serena Reese, the perfume encapsulates the *raison d'etre* of fragrance as a sexual attractant. Its top notes of pure saffron oil from India and coriander from Russia as well as its base notes of amber, Virginian cedarwood and vetivert from Haiti offer a perfect marriage of scent and seduction which make for one unforgettable experience altogether.

There's even an adorable 25-ml purse spray called "Little One" and a sexy triplet of lacquered glass called "Menage-a-Trois." To get into the whole seduction mood, the line also has bath accessories with Silk Soaps, Bubble Luscious foam bath and a Sauce Body Glamour that's sure to make one feel absolutely ravishing!

Moving on, there's a *troisseau* of candle scents made up of "Strip," "Tease" and "Six Scents" which make up the line.

I don't know if I'll ever get the inclination to actually purchase one of the brand's naughty apparel—for now I'd rather just stick with the thought that it's an option should I ever care for it. However, I'm more than happy to see the charming pink bottle, in its smooth oval container wittily shaped like a bomb (complete with a pin) nestled on my dressing table where I can safely indulge in private moments of olfactory escape time and again.

Agent Provocateur fragrances, extension lines and accessories are exclusively distributed by Prestige Brands Philippines, Inc. in Rustan's Department Stores, Marionnaud, SM Makati and SM Mall of Asia.



Photography
Atom Magadia
Styling Carla Sibal
and [illegible]
[illegible] Than Bare
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SCENT of a woman

cut & keep

Easy makeup
for a younger-looking you

Wearing outdated makeup is a surefire way to add years to your appearance

By Barbi Chan
Contributor

HAVE YOU BEEN WEARING THE same look, same makeup, same color for the last five years? If you answer yes to any of the above questions, then it is fair to say you are not making the most of your looks.

Wearing out-of-fashion, outdated makeup is a surefire way to add years to your appearance. If you're still stuck in a rut and don't know where and how to start changing your appearance, don't despair—there is hope.

As a start, I suggest you go to a professional and get a makeover. This way, you get to experiment and see which color suits you before you buy and spend all that money. But if you are the type of person who wants to experiment and just need a little push to throw away that "makeup security blanket" you've been holding on to for years, here are some basic guidelines and steps for that new you.

1. Add a youthful glow with blusher. Forget about adding color to your skin with your foundation. This will just create a mask-like effect. Instead, recreate a youthful blush with a light touch of blusher. Smile and trace the apple of your cheeks. Then, in a circular motion, apply the blush.

Choose a light-pink color if you are on the *mestiza* side, and a rose-toned shade if you're on the *morena* side. A good brand to try is Penshoppe Duo Blush. It comes in two light and dark pink shades. You can mix the colors for the desired intensity.

2. Instead of using compact powder, try switching to loose translucent powder. Apply only on areas that need it. A common mistake of many women is to be heavy-handed when it comes to face powder. Applying too much can make the powder settle into fine lines and wrinkles on your face, emphasizing them more.

There are many loose powders in the market that have light-reflecting particles. These particles bounce light away from your skin, giving the illusion of vitality and youthfulness. Try Maybelline's Loose Powder. It comes in different shades and has those light-reflecting particles that can make you look five years younger.

3. Switch to cream-to-powder eye shadow. It applies as a smooth cream and then dries quickly to a super-soft powder finish.

4. Skip the black eyeliner. Instead, opt for a neutral-toned powder eye shadow under your lower lashes to emphasize your eyes much better.

5. If your lip line has started to fade, try using a toning lip liner before you apply lipstick. Apply by outlining your top lip first, then your lower lip. Dust your lip with powder to set the lip liner. Next, fill in your lips with moisturizing lipstick. This will help give a glossy shine to your lips and make them look fuller.

E-mail the author at bc_maybelline_ny@yahoo.com

MAKEUP BY BARBI CHAN

BEAUTY SCENT SATION

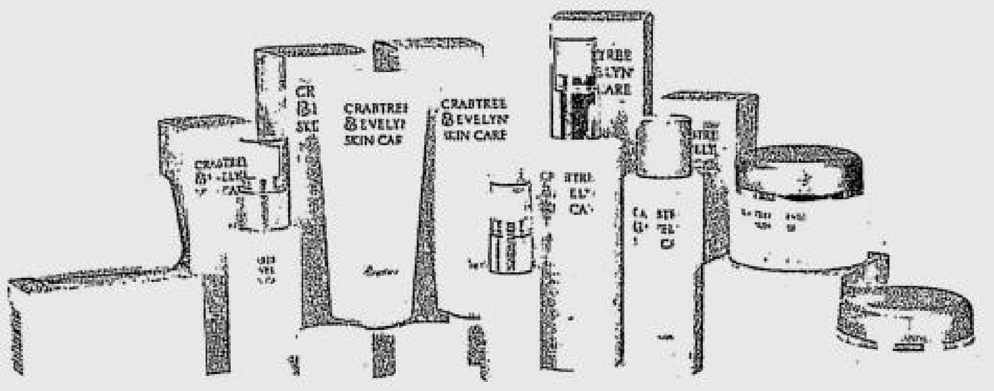
Scent of an apple

BE CAPTIVATED BY THE DELICIOUS scent of Nina, the new fragrance from Nina Ricci.

Nina is unique from other fragrances because its scent's juice contains toffee apple notes. This is the first time they have been used in a fragrance. Your senses will feast on top notes of calibrian lemon and caipirinah lime with heart notes made of toffee apple, peony and moonflower, complemented by base notes of apple wood and white cedar.

Nina is presented in an apple-shaped bottle topped with silvery leaves engraved with the Nina Ricci signature.

Available in leading department stores nationwide and exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation.



Rescue for face, eyes and lips

WOMEN THESE DAYS FACE many pressures. Stress, pollution and air conditioning all affect the condition of the skin. Which is why they will definitely appreciate the revolutionary Skin Care Remedy Collection that Crabtree & Evelyn has recently launched.

Drawing upon the powers of plants and fruits essences, Crabtree & Evelyn's new Skin Care Remedy Collection comprises of products for the face, eyes and lips. It is benefit-driven and provides simple target solutions for common skin care concerns. Natural and easy to use, it is great for busy women who want simple, yet effective solutions to support their lifestyles and skincare needs.

With Crabtree & Evelyn's new Skin Care Remedy Collection, the road to beauty is pure, simple and achievable—even for busy women.

Asian expertise for Asian hair

TONY & JACKEY HAIR SALON has been utilizing Asian expertise for Asian hair for years.

Tony & Jackey started as a five-seater, one-shampoo station on Remedios Street, Malate, Manila.

It has opened a new shop at the West of Ayala Building on Buendia Avenue, Makati City.

The salon employs Korean hairstylists, said general manager Angel Kim.

Senior hairstylist is Monica Yun. She was director at the Philore Hair Salon, one of Korea's biggest hair salons. She was also the top stylist at the Moz Hair Salon, which is known among Korean celebrities.

Stylist Kenny Choi graduated at the top of his class in the Syrism Instructor Course and Wella Color Course. He had also appeared as an instructor at the Busan Backsko Hair Show. Before Tony & Jackey, he was director of the Chang Phili Hair Salon, one of Korea's top hair salons.

Jacob Lee was a senior hairstylist at the Park Sung Chuil Hair Studio, one of Korea's famous hair salons that specializes in Asian style perm. He had appeared on Chinese TV and worked at the Hong Kong Nao hair salon, a top hair salon in Hong Kong.

Another senior stylist is Calvin Kim, who used to work at G. Hair World, a hair salon in Korea known for perm, rebonding and coloring. He had also trained in Australia.

Chani, meanwhile, worked as a makeup artist for Korean TV Station MBC. He also worked for Toni & Guy in Korea, Sydney, Australia and Hong Kong.

Kim said Tony & Jackey uses only Korean hair products and L'Oreal.

Over time, the salon has become known for hair rebonding and hair perm.

Its other services include makeup and style, hair treatment, hair coloring and nail art.

Visit Tony & Jackey at the corner of Remedios and Guerrero Streets, Malate, Metro Manila, tel. 5236607/3021984; and at West of Ayala, Buendia Avenue, Makati, tel. 8437571/0906-3659155.

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For every PRIVIA PX-110 digital piano purchase, get a FREE SUSTAIN PEDAL (SP-30) when you present this coupon. (A P4,995 Value.)
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Coupon valid from Oct. 4 to 31, 2006 only.
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Vitamins and other supplements for the skin

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

THE MOMENT I TURNED ON MY COMPUTER to write about my exciting, new and reasonably priced beauty discovery from Malaysia, I was surprised to see 300-plus messages on my inbox. They were mainly excited reactions to my Visia Complexion Analyzer results from Belo clinic. Most of the questions are summed up by the query: "What supplements do you take for your skincare?"

The exciting Malaysian brand will have to wait till next Friday as I will have to answer the query or else my inbox will overload.

The bulk of my supplements I buy from any of Health Express' (HE) 16 branches nationwide. Those featured here do not form my entire regimen; they are just for skin and immunity from HE. My weight maintenance and skin tablets from other brands like Belo, Herbalife, Imedeen, etc. are not included.

The in-house Health Express brand is actually the Nature's Bounty line bought in bulk and repacked here, so the price is lower. If you become a member, you get 20-percent discount for succeeding purchases. Ask them how to go about it.

Good skin for now

The secret is tied to boosting the immune system by raising glutathione levels so your body can heal itself faster and can defend itself from free radicals.

Slight skin-whitening is merely a side effect of glutathione intake, not its main purpose. The treatment is really part of my immunity boosters that have contributed to the health of my skin, hair, brain, heart and body. Unless stated otherwise, I just take one tablet per day.

HE Time Release Radiance P980/100 tablets. A complete multivitamin that lasts up to 12 hours in the body, which is two to three times longer than others. It has extra nutrients other multivitamins lack such as gingko, ginseng, garlic, CoQ10, green tea and other trace minerals, although in very minimal amounts, so I still supplement it with extra tablets. I take it at night before sleeping as it makes me hungry when taken in the day so I tend to overeat.

HE Super Antioxidant formula P770/100 pcs. When the season changes or when I travel, I boost my immunities with this formula. It contains 25,000 iu of Vitamin A from Beta Carotene, which is good for the eyes, skin hydration, etc. It's nontoxic.

It also contains 500 mg of Vitamin C for fighting colds, boosting collagen production, and raising glutathione levels. It also has Vitamin E d-alpha tocopherol—the purest form. (The d-alpha tocopherol is not just like most E capsules which are just synthetic, and absorption could only be as little as 1/8 of the pure form.)

Selenium skin protection works with Vitamin E; it prevents cancer and heart disease, improves thyroid function and boosts glutathione. Take it along with a meal as Vitamins A and E are fat-soluble and best absorbed with oils.

No time to eat? Ingest one tablespoon Virgin coconut oil, olive oil, or butter, then drink the tablets.

Intestinal, liver health

HE Garlic Oil 5,000 mg P420/100 tablets. Promotes intestinal health by killing bad bacteria without harming good bacteria. It kills parasites, prevents and heals colds, soothes inflammation, checks heart disease and lowers bad cholesterol.

HE Silymarin Milk Thistle 1,000 mg P520/30 tablets. This is the star product of Health Express as it is the liver's best ally. You cannot find another brand with higher milligrams. It protects, detoxifies and regenerates the liver so our immune system can function properly and toxins are safely expelled from our system. If you take supplements like me or love drinking alcohol and eating fatty food, Silymarin is something you should drink daily for liver protection!

HE Coenzyme Q10 30 mg P1,600/100 pcs. Prevents and reverses gum disease in mild cases, gives energy, slows aging process, contributes to weight loss as it converts fat to energy, enhances endurance and aerobic performance, prevents cancer, and strengthens the heart. I take 90 mg with each meal.

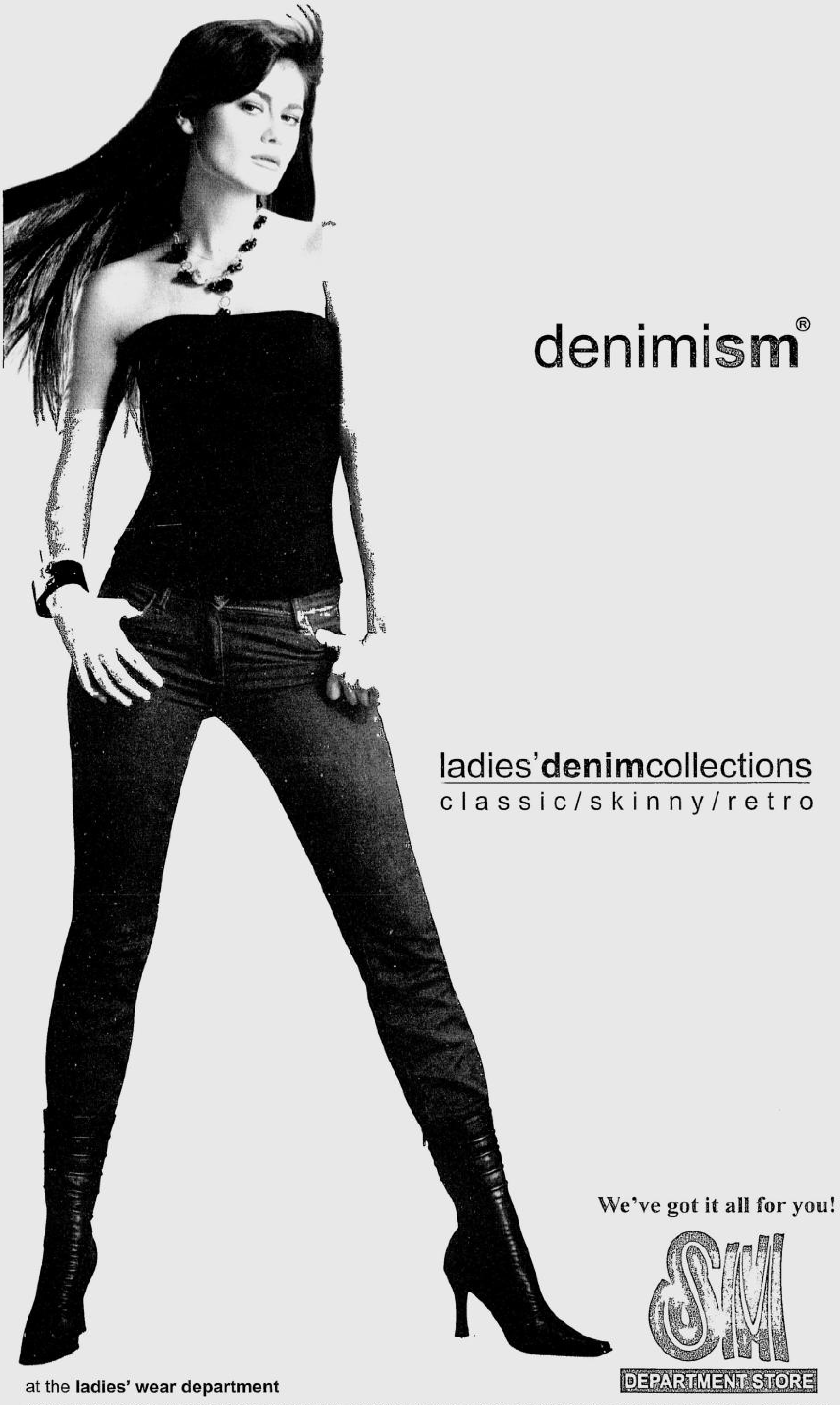
Creams containing CoQ10 prevents pigmentation from age spots and heals existing ones.

HE Chromium Picolinate 200 mcg P400/100 pcs. Sugar ages your skin by clinging to and breaking down collagen fibers, causing the skin to sag and making you gain weight, too. I take two tablets of CP to lower my blood sugar, increase lean muscle mass, suppress appetite, control hunger, and reduce body fat.

Note: If you are a diabetic, consult a doctor before taking this or your blood sugar might crash and you would go on a coma!

The HE Gingko Biloba 100 mg for improved memory and circulation has gone down in price from P830 to P650.

Consult your doctor as these supplements may have harmful side effects for you. Look for the head pharmacist in Health Express branches for consultations on the products. I have been stopped by the pharmacist from buying certain supplements that would clash with my thyroid condition. Don't hesitate to ask and don't get mad when they prevent you from buying certain products. Check out their website at www.healthexpressph.com.



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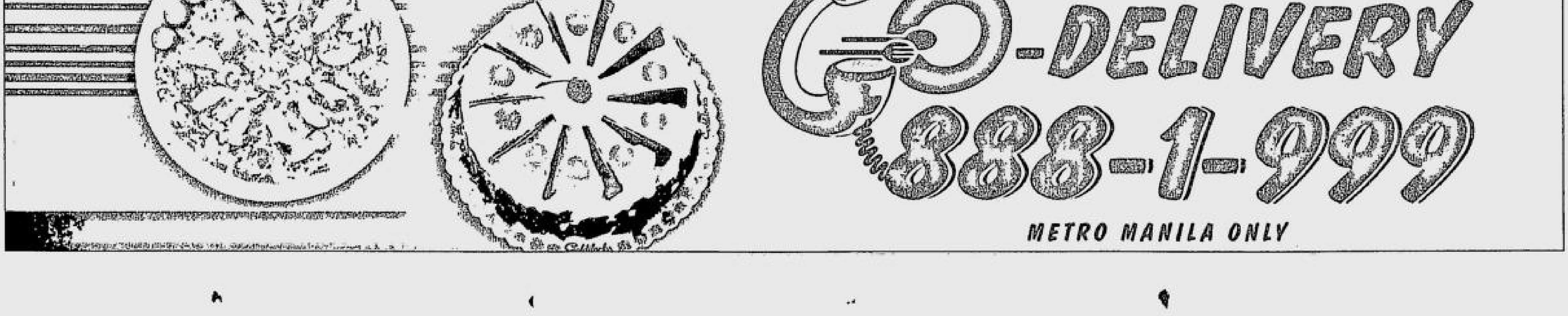

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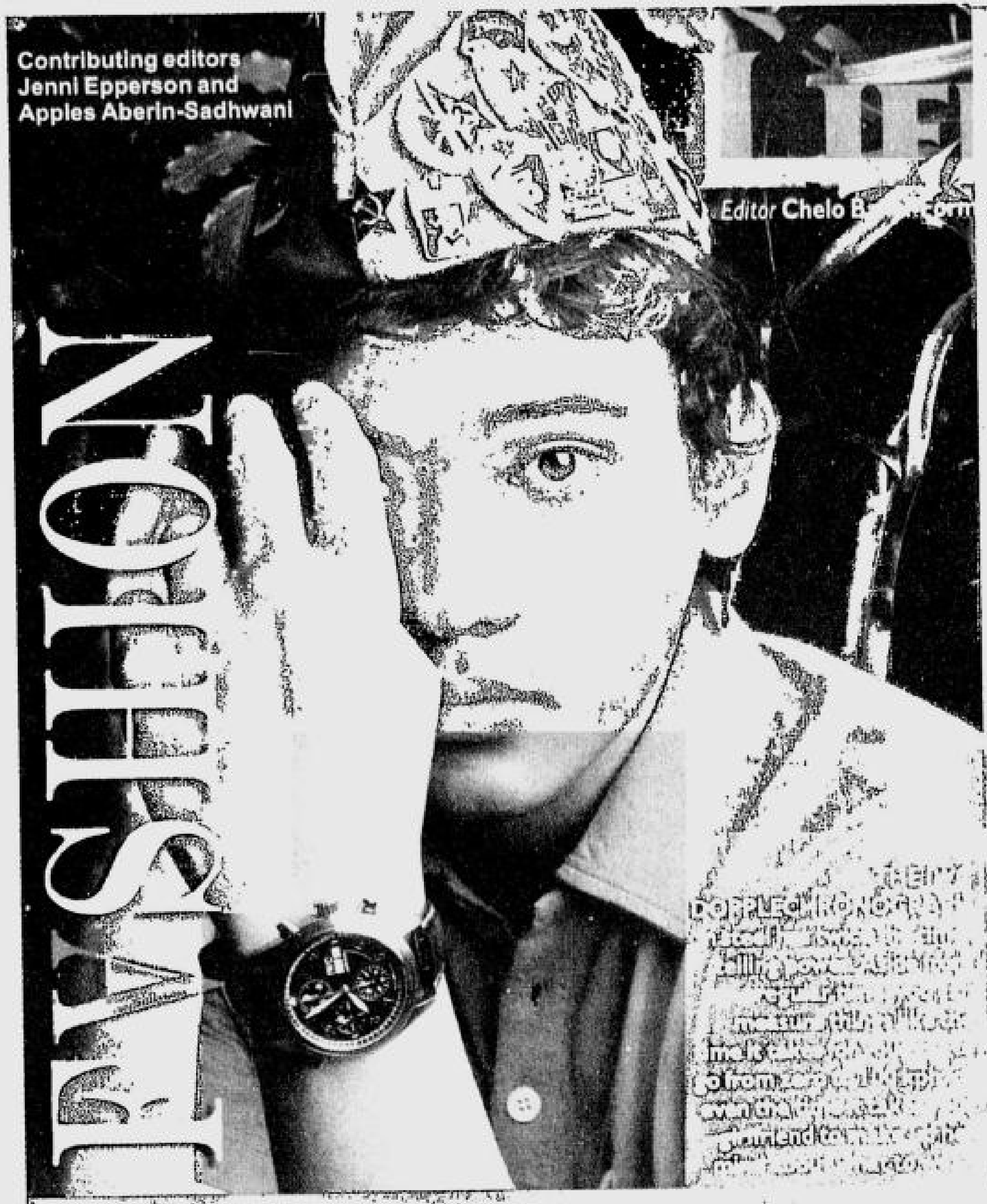
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Editor Chelo B
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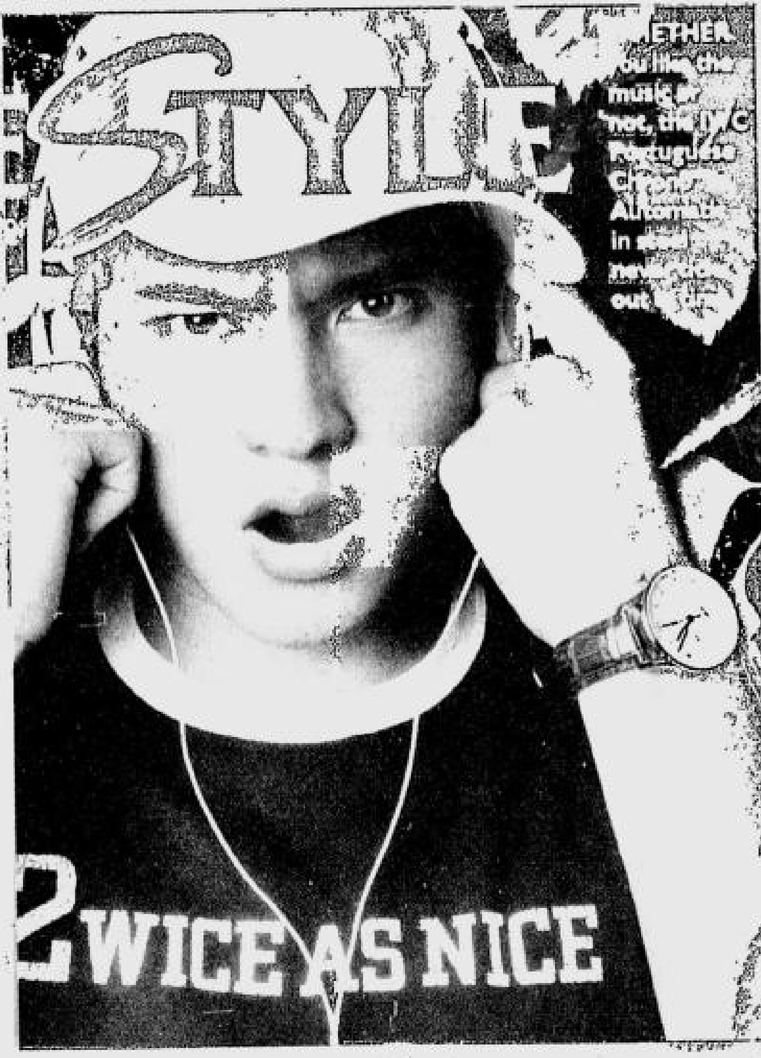
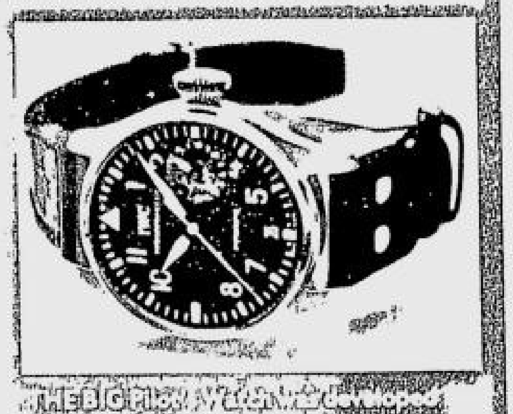
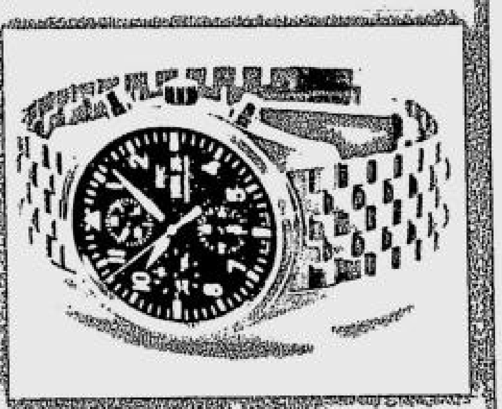
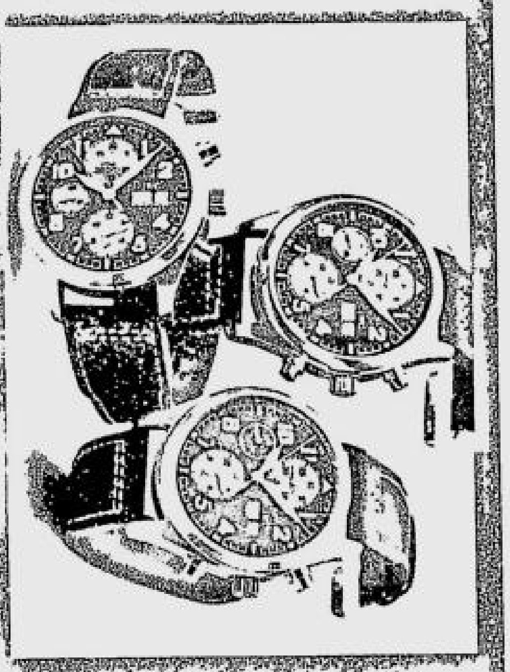

STYLE
2WICE AS NICE
WHETHER you like the music or not, the IWC Portuguese Chrono Automatic in steel never [illegible] out



THE BIG Pilot's Watch was developed in 1940 for military [illegible]. This latest model features a seven-day power reserve and date display.



THE PILOT'S Watch Double Chronograph is the watch for the man's man, all power and split-second timing. This newest incarnation will be launched Oct. 17 along with the rest of this year's newest models from IWC.



LIMITED edition of the Pilot's Watch [illegible]

ENCHONG tries to conserve power. But his watch doesn't have to [illegible] for seven days. The IWC [illegible] Days Power Reserve in rose gold has enough energy [illegible] for a week without getting recharged.

POSSIBLE [illegible] for [illegible] constant [illegible] environment [illegible] IWC Aquatimer

Perfect timing

The International Watch Company has tried-and-tested rugged watches that are the epitome of cool

FOR ASPIRING OLYMPIC swimmer Enchong Dee, one isn't just a number. It's the place to be—right at the top. After all, who wouldn't want to be No. 1, the alpha dog, the head of the class… you get the picture?

Underneath Enchong's angelic appearance is a fiercely competitive soul who sweetly does whatever it takes to get what he wants. And what he wants now is an Olympic gold.

He's well-positioned to do so. He spends day in, day out swimming laps for hours on end, at times when most of us would be asleep or out having fun. All that on top of his studies at De La Salle University, where he's taking up Sports Management. Yet he still takes time out to have his share of boyish fun.

Jenni Epperson

Obviously, getting to No. 1 involves self-discipline, time management, and a drive for perfection. What better way to track time than with a watch created by engineers of perfection?

The International Watch Company—or IWC to those in the know—has long been creating precise timepieces.

IWC's watches easily keep track of Enchong's grueling schedule and lifestyle. Not to mention that with oversized cases, materials like titanium, and the technosexual-looking dials, these watches are the epitome of cool.

IWC has also been deeply involved in the creation of pilots' watches since the 1930s, when its watches were known for their sturdiness and optimal legibility. In fact, it has been making watches to spec for the military. The most famous pilot's watch, the Mark 11, was well-loved by military and civilian pilots alike.

Aside from being easy to read, IWC watches have an additional inner case made of soft iron to protect them against magnetic fields—a real requirement when in the cockpit.

Of course, aside from its popular Pilot's Watches range, this engineer of fine watch-making also has other models that are just as beloved.

The Aquatimer, for example, is a top choice for divers and water sport enthusiasts. With its tie-up with the famous Cousteau Society (Jacques-Yves Cousteau, after all, is the legendary underwater explorer who brought to light the wonders of the deep), IWC has created a watch that not only contains features that divers find useful (inner bezel, chronograph reset button, etc.), but also benefits underwater environments.

IWC's tradition of excellence continues today, to the delight of pilots—and pilot wannabes—and IWC enthusiasts. The latest IWC Pilot's Watches will be revealed, together with the rest of IWC's collections, at an exclusive launch at Shangri-La Plaza Oct. 17. Then a weeklong exhibit will be open to the public Oct. 18.

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Photography/Digital Imaging Mark Nicdao
of wildbunchstudio
Model Enchong Dee
Makeup by The Face Shop
Hair & Grooming by Fix Salon
IWC WATCHES ARE AVAILABLE AT LUCERNE AT G/F, GLORIETTA 4, MAKATI CITY, AND 2/F SHANGRI-LA PLAZA, MANDALUYONG CITY, AND AT CHRONOS, POWER PLANT MALL, ROCKWELL CENTER, AND SM MEGAMALL, PASIG CITY.
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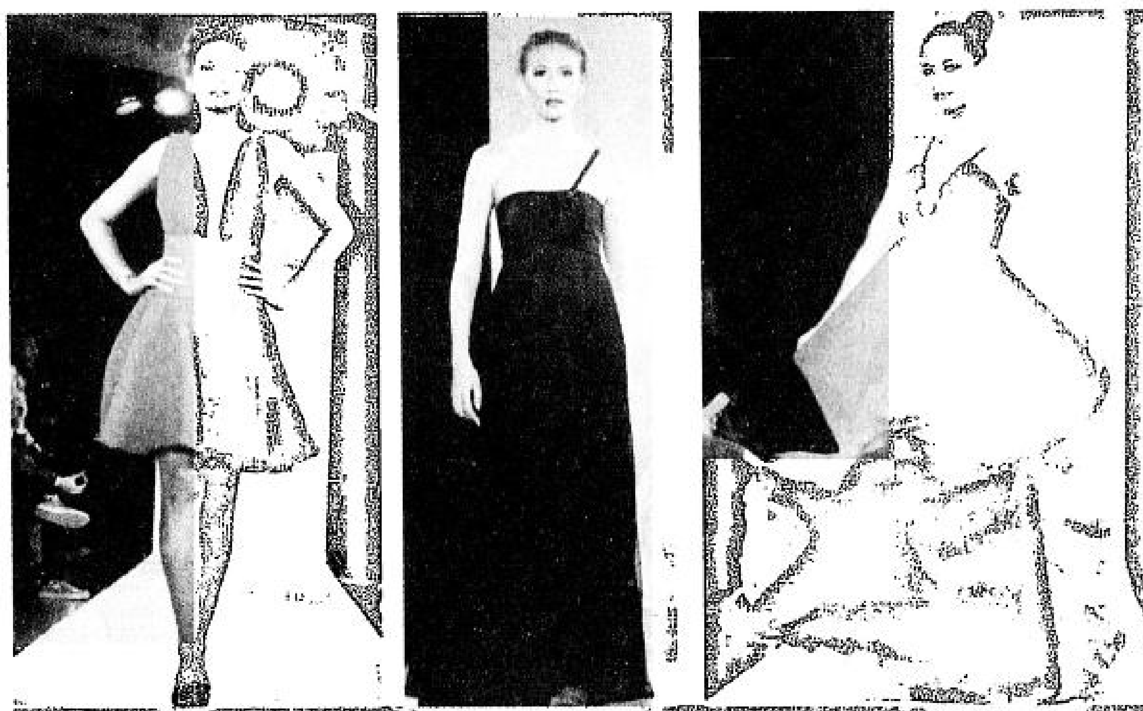
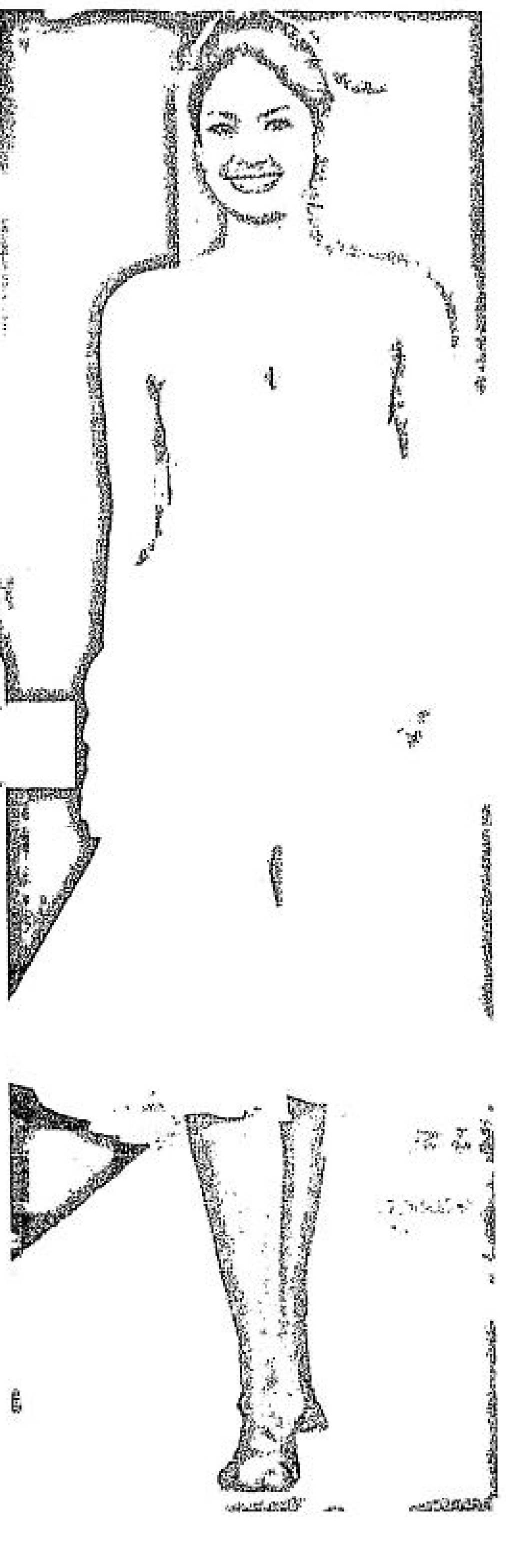
Dennis Lustico [illegible]





Rhett Eala [illegible]

Fab fashion trio

Rajo Laurel, Rhett Eala and Dennis Lustico in one show was a strong start for the Metrowear series

LET ME START BY SAYING THAT IT was quite difficult for me to review the Metrowear show of Rajo Laurel, Rhett Eala and Dennis Lustico. I was a model for more than half my lifetime so most industry denizens are my friends or acquaintances. It was a real challenge to stay objective, but I'd like to think I managed to get the job done.

In any case, Rajo, Rhett and Dennis were kicking off quite a major production that aimed to espouse and promote Philippine fashion. So I, and everyone else for that matter, expected a lot from them. They're also three of Manila's most sought-after designers, so fashion watchers were naturally very eager to see what the design trio had to offer.

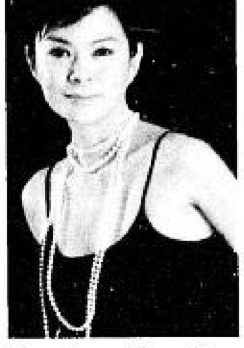
"I aimed to answer the question of what Princess Diana would wear if she were alive today," said Rajo Laurel of the House of Laurel, who opened the show with opulent Anglo-inspired pieces.

Paying homage to the late princess, Rajo came up with a collection that was inspired by English aristocracy. His pieces were characterized by reworked leg-of-mutton sleeves, Victorian ruffles and ladylike trappings such as gloves and stockings.

Rajo used rich materials like taffeta, brocade and lace, and vibrant hues like sapphire blue, scarlet, teal, metallic lavender and pewter. He also combined jersey bubble dresses with ruffled taffeta boleros and presented a number of taffeta dresses and gowns.

Some of Rajo's pieces, like the lace bustier dress, and metallic jersey top matched with yet another metallic long skirt, were reminiscent of the '80s TV series "Dynasty." I half-expected a modern, stylized version of Alexis Carrington to walk down the runway. But despite the association with the over-the-top Alexis, Rajo's collection was unmistakably made for the ready-to-wear market and mostly comprised festive, failsafe, wearable pieces.

APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

If Rajo drew inspiration from the proper English, Rhett Eala drew his from the lyrical Greeks. Rhett presented an ultra-feminine collection of mostly bias-cut dresses made of chiffon. His collection was inspired by the likes of Madame Vionnet, who liberated women from constricting corsets, and Madame Gres, who was famous for her liquid draping.

To create a play of textures, Rhett incorporated materials like Thai silk and tweed. Except for two or three pieces made of these materials, most of his dresses were flowing and fluid.

"Each of my pieces were easily made of 20 yards of fabric," said Rhett. This obviously signaled a return to luxury, although he was quick to say he was not a big fan of heavy beadwork and ornamentation.

Rhett's collection was timeless and not driven by trends. Model Ilona was quite the stunner in the red empire-cut chiffon finale. The designer obviously knows his strengths and market well, and has stuck to a formula that works.

Showstopper

The real showstopper of the evening was Dennis Lustico's all-black collection. Fashion insiders held their collective breath as model after model came out in awe-inspiring pieces that were far from the usual basic black dress or getup. Dennis definitely presented a few more incarnations of the ubiquitous black outfit in the form of stylized low waist culottes, pea jackets and long evening dresses.

"My collection is a behaved, disciplined interpretation of the '80s," said the designer. This reference probably points to his indulgence in details, volume and proportion. Dennis, however, practiced some restraint and maturity, not to mention a keen eye for detail that resulted in an exciting, cutting-edge collection.

Dennis brought his designs to life with the use of materials like silk organdy and organdy, tulle, jersey and satinized twill and crepe. He also incorporated details such as twisted bands, flowers, plus graphic Biedermeier-inspired details in the form of curves and cutouts.

"My purpose was to challenge the market to try something new, to be different and to move forward in fashion," added Dennis. His collection, though not made for less-than-model types, will definitely inspire and spawn more wearable versions.

So were these three designers able to live up to expectations? As a whole, I'd say they put on a show worth watching, even for the jaded fashionista crowd. It was a strong start for the Metrowear series.

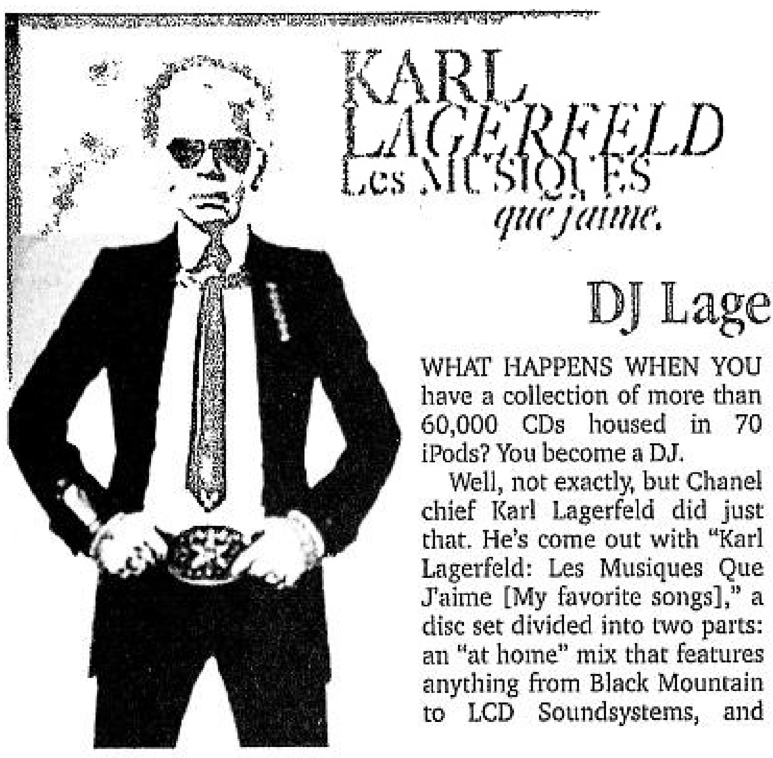
Individually, well, I've said my piece. Now, you be the judge.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Rajo Laurel [illegible]

FASHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!



DJ Lagerfeld

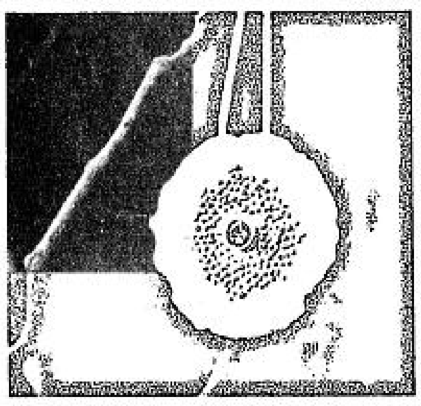
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU have a collection of more than 60,000 CDs housed in 70 iPods? You become a DJ.

Well, not exactly, but Chanel chief Karl Lagerfeld did just that. He's come out with "Karl Lagerfeld: Les Musiques Que J'aime [My favorite songs]," a disc set divided into two parts: an "at home" mix that features anything from Black Mountain to LCD Soundsystems, and "fashion show" beats that range from Stravinsky to Stereolab.

Though it is hard to imagine Lagerfeld wearing headphones (with interlocking "C" logos?) and "spinning" at a club (but then again, he used to strut in Paris cafés in fur and high heels in the '70s, so anything is possible), his CDs are sure to sell as fast as his H&M T-shirts.

So if you're itching to hear DJ Karl's tracks, log on to amazon.fr or ask a relative to buy you a copy in the US when it's released this November.

Jewel tones



KRISTINE DEE PRESENTS her newest collection of handcrafted jewelry in the exhibit, "Standstill."

The collection uses mostly gold and a bit of silver as the base, with pearls, semi-precious stones, and diamonds.

"I was drawn to the details in life forms such as a bird's egg, monocots and dicots, seedlings and fronds of plants," Dee explained. Although the new designs use the principles of balance, suspension and depth, they seem to look more alive because Kristine captures and "freezes" those details into earrings, rings, brooches and pendants.

The 30-year-old Dee developed her skill in jewelry design and crafting while taking her Masters in Industrial Design at New York's Pratt Institute.

"Standstill" will run from Oct. 20-Nov. 20 at the Izukan Gallery, Unit 2101, 88 Corporate Center, 141 Valero and Salcedo Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati. Call 7525696 to 98.

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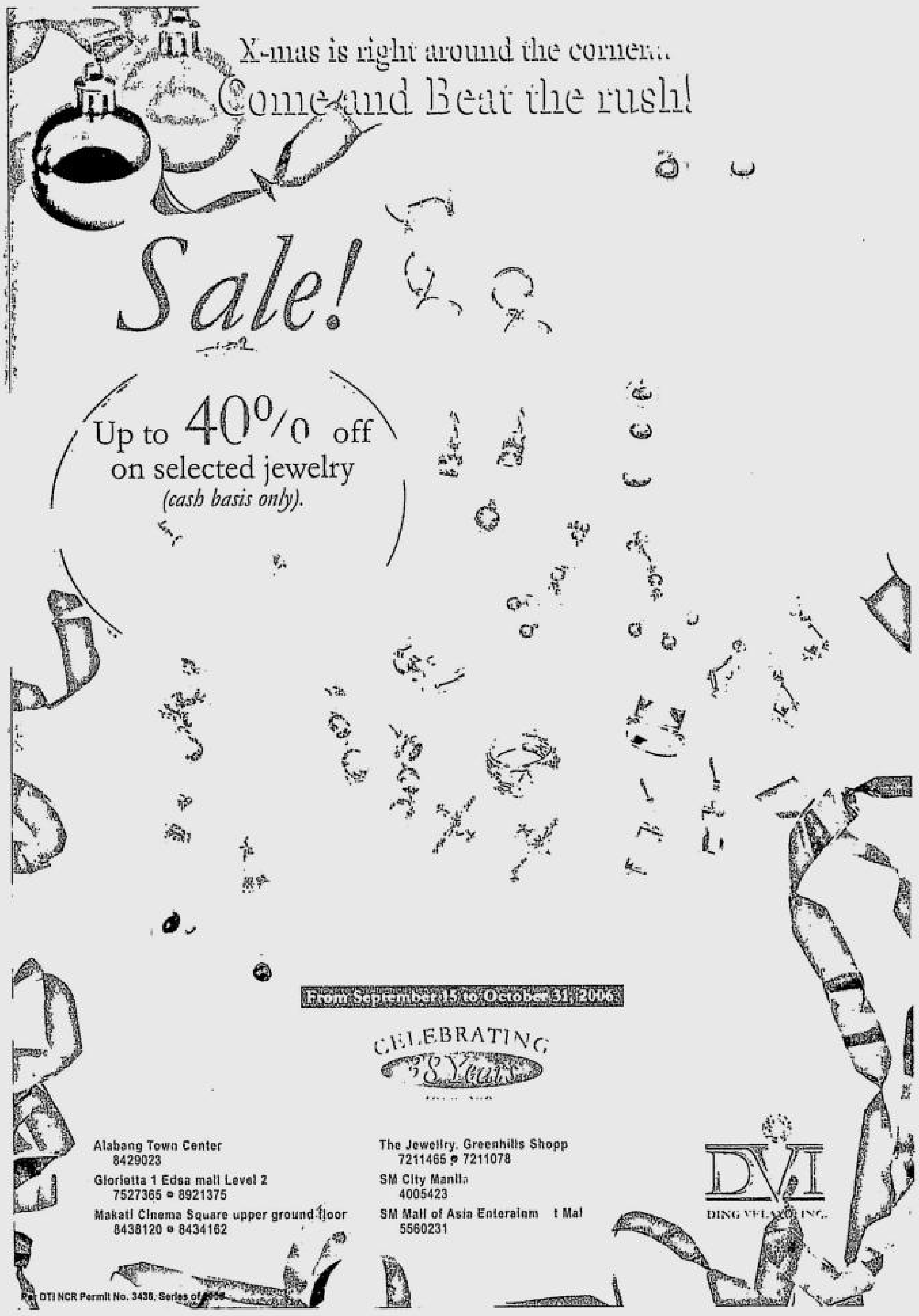
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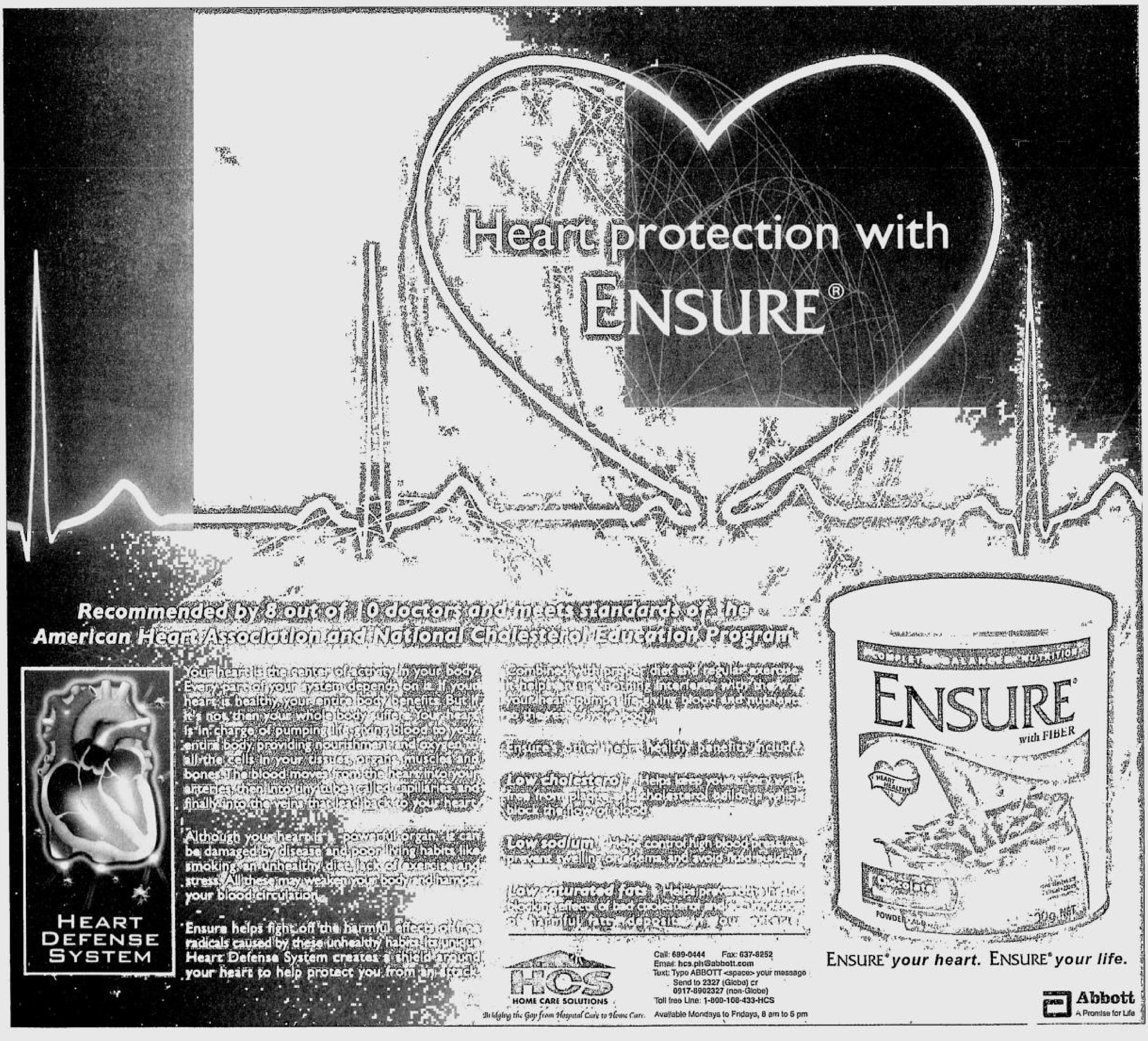
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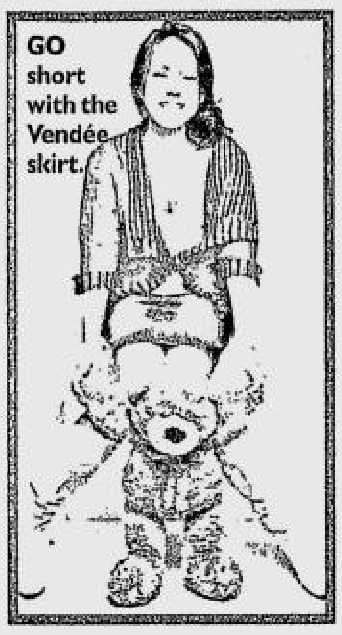
LIFESTYLE

Jean tonic, s'il vous plait

Paris fashion label Lulu Castagnette says 'Oui!' to a denim line exclusive for Filipinas

IF super-lows are just not your style, go for mid-waist straight fits like this pair called Avignon.



GO short with the Vendée skirt.

CHATOU. This super-low bootcut style got its name from the island by the Seine made popular by Renoir. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

By Cheche V. Moral

A WOMAN CAN NEVER HAVE enough shoes. Likewise, a Filipino woman, it seems, can never have enough pairs of jeans.

Jeans are so popular in the Filipinos' casual lifestyle that, only a year after it launched locally, the Paris fashion label Lulu Castagnette has developed a jeans line specific to the Philippine market.

Jeans have been part of the brand's regular collection, said brand manager Nicole Villanueva, but it has never created a full line. There would be only one or two styles each season, "but we recognize their popularity among Filipinos that Paris gave us permission to develop an entire line. The design direction comes from Paris."

The Philippines was the first Asian country to carry the 10-year-old brand when it launched here last year. It has since been introduced in Japan and Singapore.

Lulu Jeans initially has six fits or styles of denim jeans that cater to women's varied tastes, body types and age groups. Each fit is named after a place in France. There's the super-low slim, the brand's take on the skinny trend, for trendier women. A mid-waist cut is intended for a more mature segment. Lulu Castagnette caters to the 18-35 market. (In other countries, it also has homeware and children's lines.)

The teddy bear, Lulu Castagnette's logo, is evocative of many fun, carefree childhood memories. And it's possibly this universal impression that has enabled the brand to find a kindred spirit in Filipinas.

Villanueva said the brand espouses a fun and casual spirit, and it seems to fit well with the Filipino psyche. Filipinos are, by and large, conservative, she added, that its offering of wearable pieces fits perfectly.

"It's trendy and fashionable but it's not [overtly] sexy."

Priced from P1,998 to P2,298, Lulu Jeans will offer more designs, washes and colors in the coming months, according to Villanueva.

"We are allowed to do our own pricing so, yes, you can say our prices are significantly lower than in other countries."

Available in its four boutiques (Glorietta, Mall of Asia, SM Megamall and SM North Edsa) and two Rustan's outlets (Alabang and Ermita), Lulu Castagnette will present its Fall/Holiday 2006 collection in a mini fashion show at its Glorietta 4 store at 6 tonight.

BORDEAUX, a low-waist bootcut, and Vienne, the brand's version of the skinny jeans JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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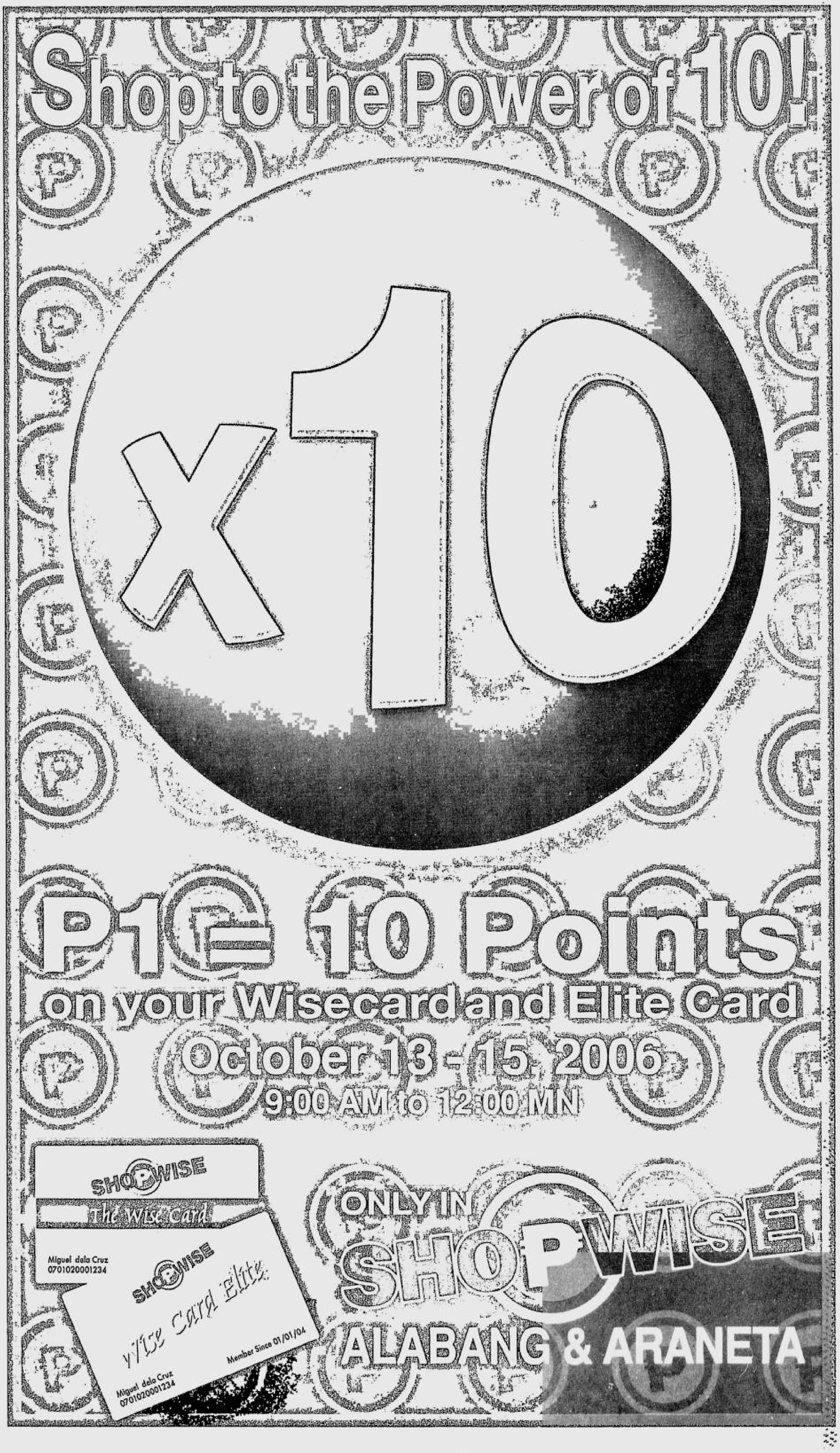

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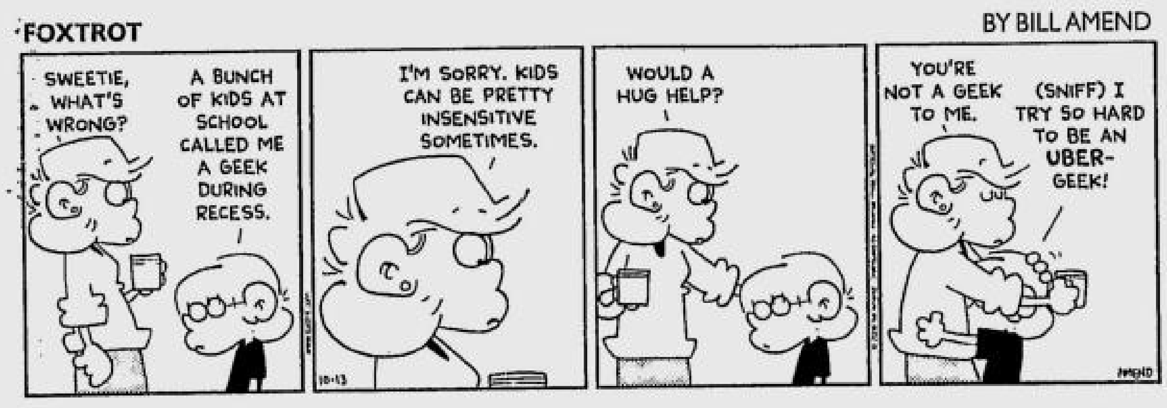
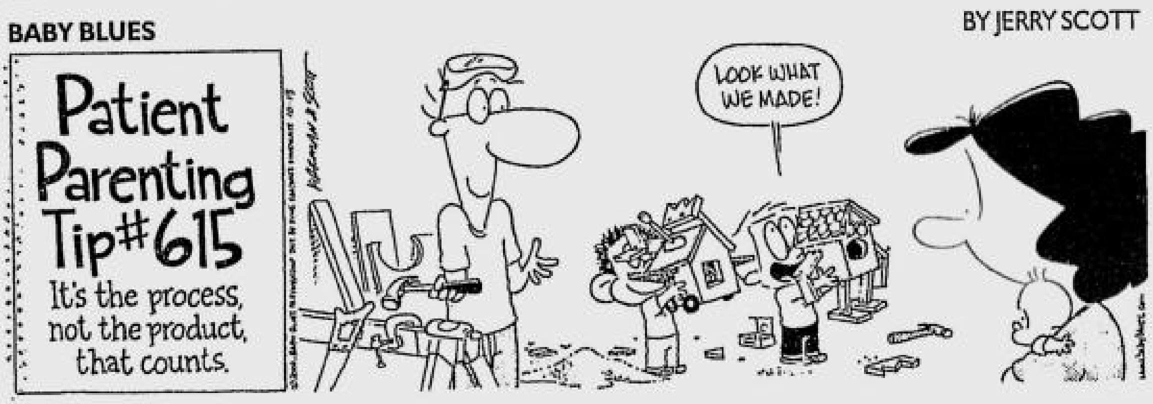
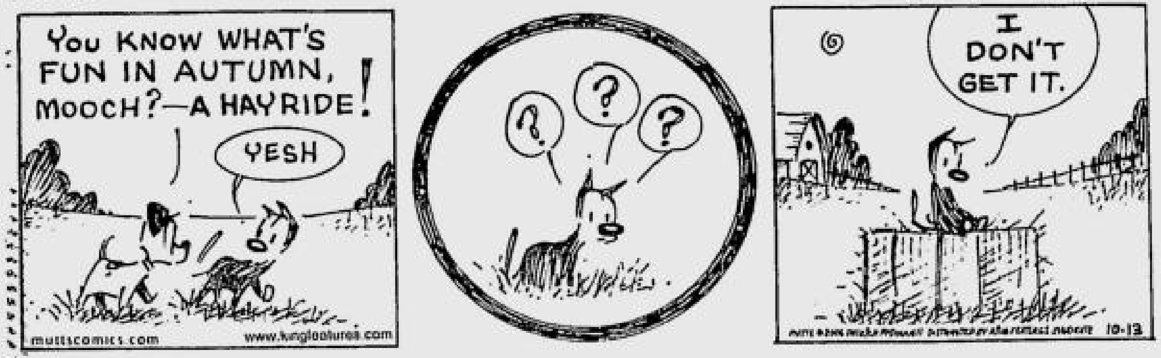

SWEETIE, WHAT'S WRONG?
A BUNCH OF KIDS AT SCHOOL CALLED ME A GEEK DURING RECESS.
I'M SORRY. KIDS CAN BE PRETTY INSENSITIVE SOMETIMES.
WOULD A HUG HELP?
YOU'RE NOT A GEEK TO ME.
(SNIFF) I TRY SO HARD TO BE AN UBER-GEEK!

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


Patient Parenting Tip#615
It's the process, not the product, that counts.
LOOK WHAT WE MADE!

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


You KNOW WHAT'S FUN IN AUTUMN, MOOCH?—A HAYRIDE!
YESH
? ? ?
I DON'T GET IT.
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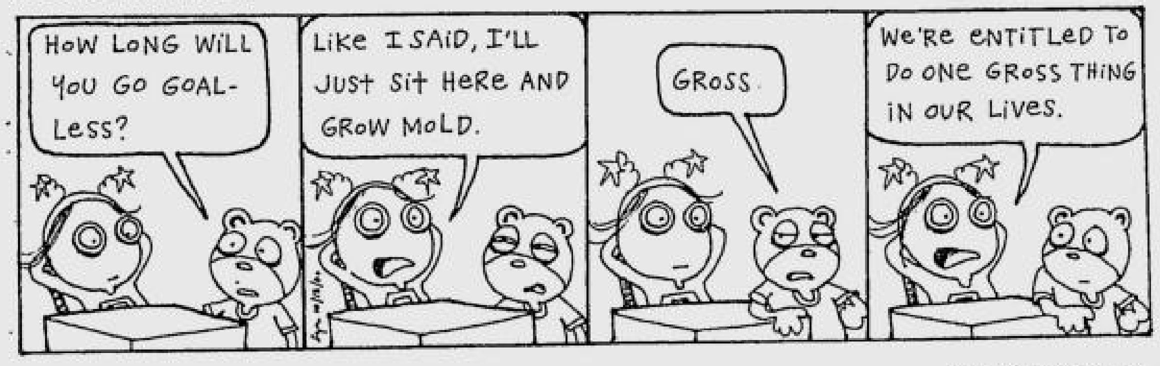
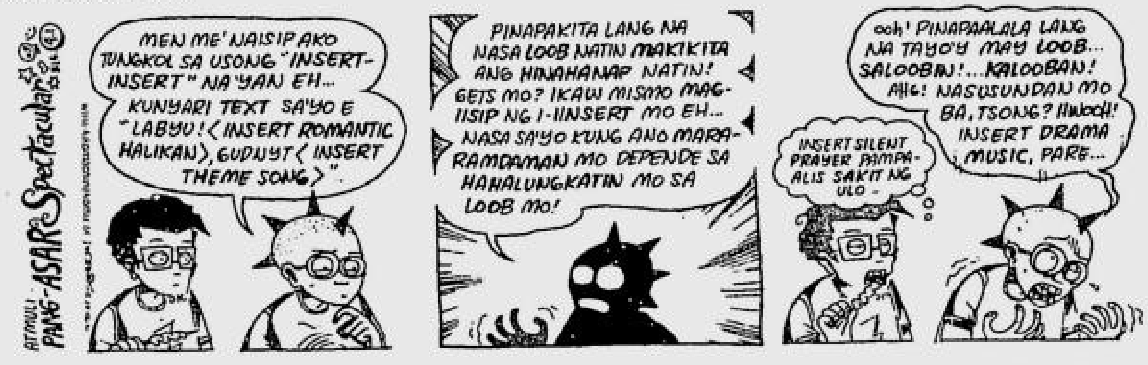
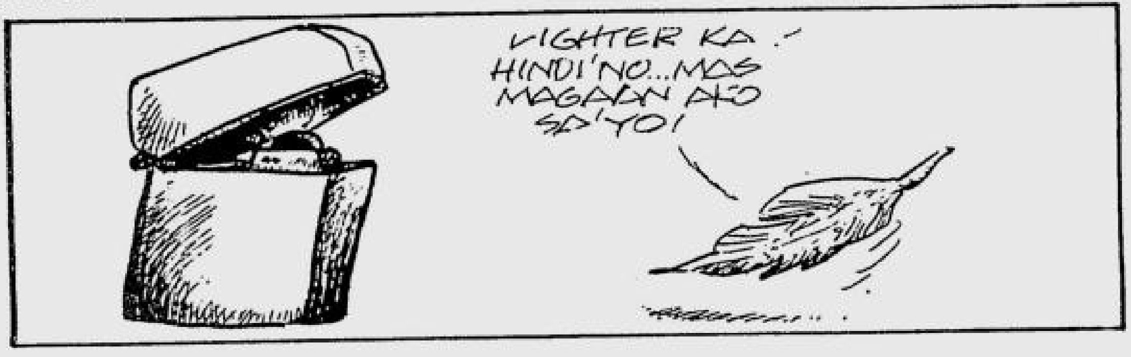
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


How LONG WILL YOU GO GOAL-LESS?
Like I SAID, I'LL JUST SIT HERE AND GROW MOLD.
GROSS.
We're ENTITLED TO DO ONE GROSS THING IN OUR LIVES.

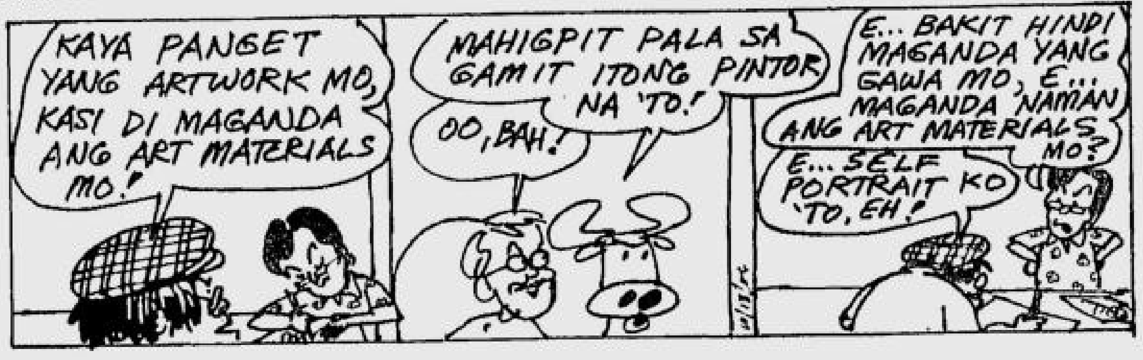
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


AT MULI! PANG-ASAR SPECTACULAR!
MEN ME' NAISIP AKO TUNGKOL SA USONG "INSERT-INSERT" NA'YAN EH... KUNYARI TEXT SA'YO E "LABYU! <INSERT ROMANTIC HALIKAN>, GUDNYT <INSERT THEME SONG>".
PINAPAKITA LANG NA NASA LOOB NATIN MAKIKITA ANG HINAHANAP NATIN! GETS MO? IKAW MISMO MAG-IISIP NG I-INSERT MO EH... NASA SA'YO KUNG ANO MARARAMDAMAN MO DEPENDE SA HAHALUNGKATIN MO SA LOOB MO!
ooh! PINAPAALALA LANG NA TAYO'Y MAY LOOB... SALOOBIN!... KALOOBAN! AIIG! NASUSUNDAN MO BA, TSONG? AWOCH! INSERT DRAMA MUSIC, PARE...
INSERT SILENT PRAYER PAMPA-ALIS SAKIT NG ULO -

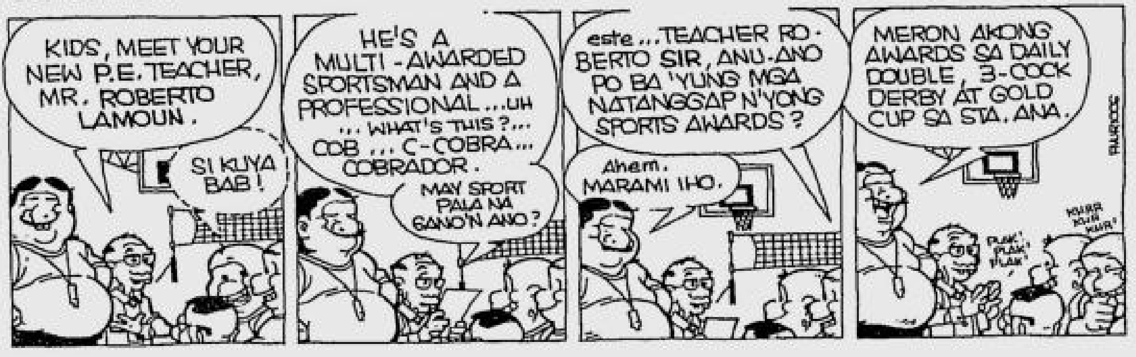
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


LIGHTER KA.
HINDI'NO...MAS MAGAAN AKO SA'YO!

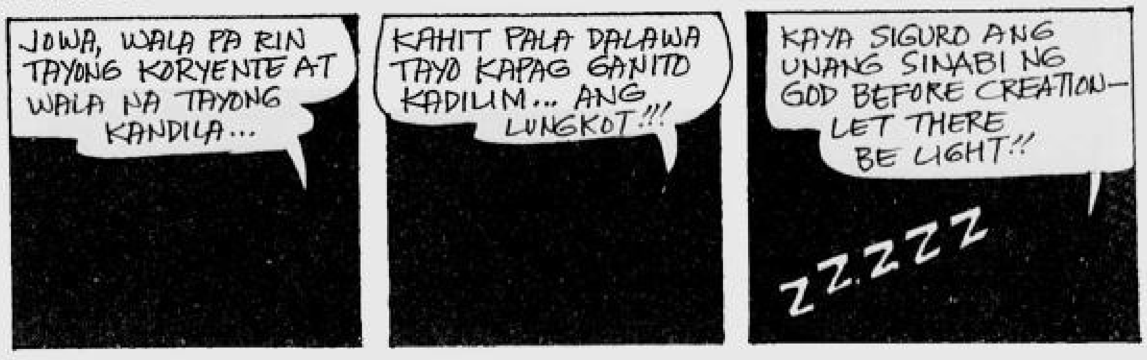
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KAYA PANGET YANG ARTWORK MO, KASI DI MAGANDA ANG ART MATERIALS MO!
MAHIGPIT PALA SA GAMIT ITONG PINTOR NA 'TO!
OO, BAH!
E... BAKIT HINDI MAGANDA YANG GAWA MO, E... MAGANDA NAMAN ANG ART MATERIALS MO?
E... SELF PORTRAIT KO 'TO, EH!

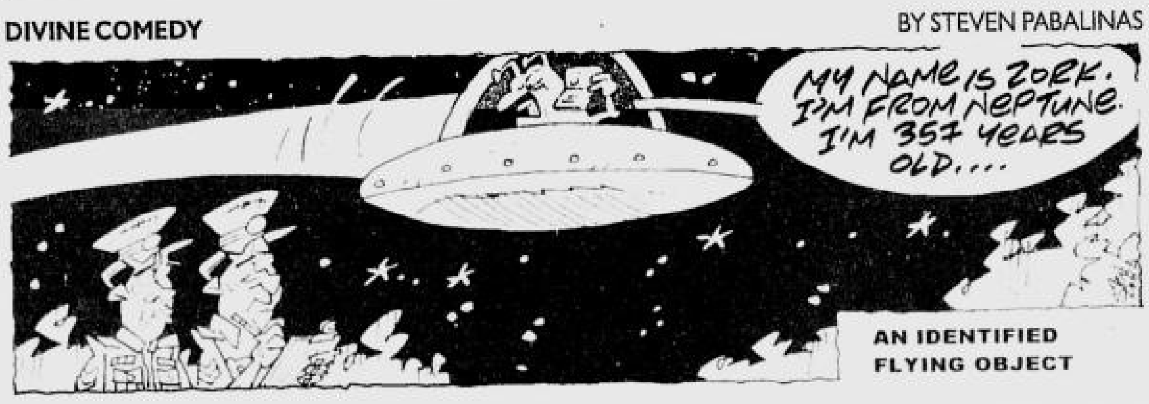
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


KIDS, MEET YOUR NEW P.E. TEACHER, MR. ROBERTO LAMOUN.
SI KUYA BAB!
HE'S A MULTI-AWARDED SPORTSMAN AND A PROFESSIONAL...uh ... WHAT'S THIS?... COB... C-COBRA... COBRADOR.
MAY SPORT PALA NA GANO'N ANO?
este... TEACHER ROBERTO SIR, ANU-ANO PO BA 'YUNG MGA NATANGGAP N'YONG SPORTS AWARDS?
Ahem. MARAMI IHO.
MERON AKONG AWARDS SA DAILY DOUBLE, 3-COCK DERBY AT GOLD CUP SA STA. ANA.

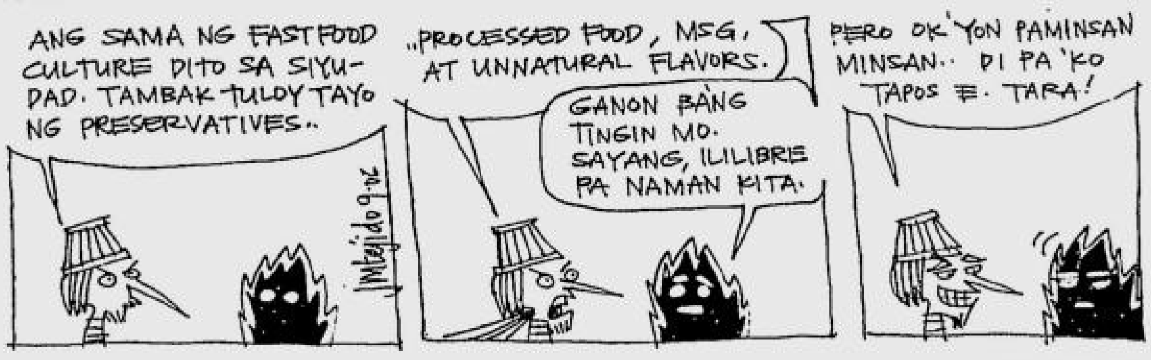
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, WALA PA RIN TAYONG KORYENTE AT WALA NA TAYONG KANDILA...
KAHIT PALA DALAWA TAYO KAPAG GANITO KADILIM... ANG LUNGKOT!!!
KAYA SIGURO ANG UNANG SINABI NG GOD BEFORE CREATION— LET THERE BE LIGHT!!
ZZZZZ

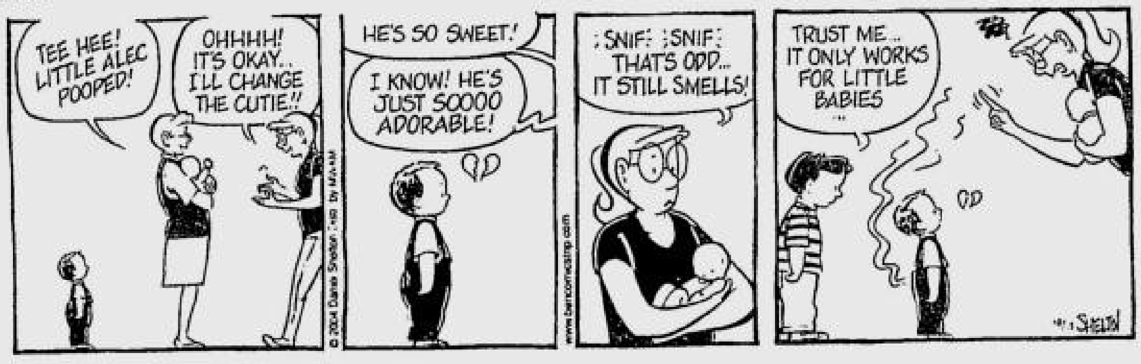
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MY NAME IS ZORK. I'M FROM NEPTUNE. I'M 357 YEARS OLD....
AN IDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT

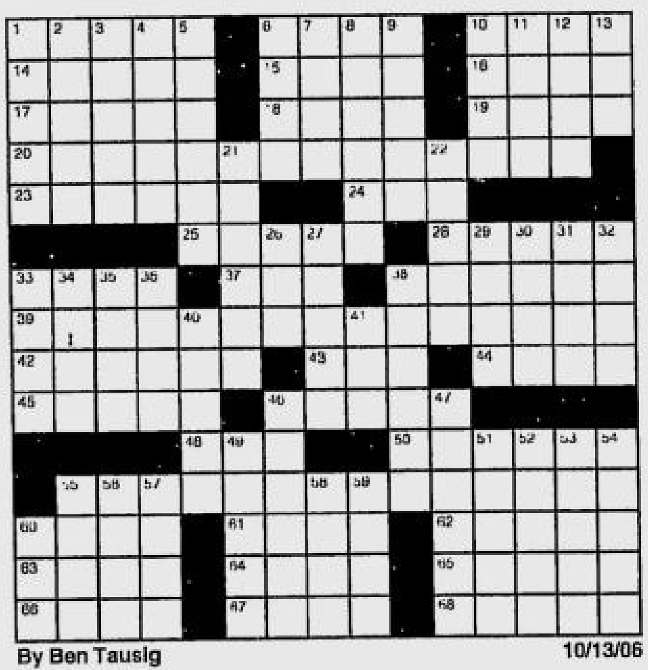
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG SAMA NG FAST FOOD CULTURE DITO SA SIYUDAD. TAMBAK TULOY TAYO NG PRESERVATIVES..
..PROCESSED FOOD, MSG, AT UNNATURAL FLAVORS.
GANON BANG TINGIN MO. SAYANG, ILILIBRE PA NAMAN KITA.
PERO OK 'YON PAMINSAN MINSAN.. DI PA 'KO TAPOS E. TARA!

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


TEE HEE! LITTLE ALEC POOPED!
OHHHH! IT'S OKAY.. I'LL CHANGE THE CUTIE!!
HE'S SO SWEET!
I KNOW! HE'S JUST SOOOO ADORABLE!
;SNIF; ;SNIF; THAT'S ODD... IT STILL SMELLS!
TRUST ME... IT ONLY WORKS FOR LITTLE BABIES ...

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Ben Tausig
Brooklyn, NY

10/13/06

ACROSS

1 Mixture
6 Doctor's tablet
10 __ won't hurt a bit
14 Outcast
15 Sandusky's lake
16 Swear words?
17 Greek marketplace
18 Like felt
19 Phish guitarist Anastasio
20 Brass novels?
23 Paris palace
24 TiVo button
25 Tends to the furnace
28 Confiscates
33 To a degree
37 Heck, yeah!
38 Rupture
39 Brass breeds?
42 Blackjack winner
43 Little links item
44 Perceives
45 Deep operatic voices
46 Time off, for short
48 Sgt., e.g.
50 Aerie resident
55 Brass edges?
60 Beer choices
61 Writer Haley
62 Type of radiation
63 Wrath
64 Exceedingly dry
65 Glowing coal
66 Portable music device
67 "East of __"
68 Leopard's markings

DOWN

1 World-weary
2 Type of pad or brief
3 Adhesive substance
4 Peter and Franco
5 Hung in loose folds
6 Mexican coin
7 Wrinkle remover
8 Full-term inmates
9 Don't bother
10 Oz pooch
11 Listen!
12 Residents of: suff.
13 Short
21 Directly
22 Double quartet
26 Work wk. start
27 Pitiful piece of art?
29 Fine or martial follower
30 Leg bender
31 Leprechaun's land
32 Give lip
33 Shot in the dark
34 Killer whale
35 "The Simpsons" tavern
36 CPR experts
38 One obeying
40 Existence
41 D.C. VIP
46 Turned over
47 Stovetops
49 Knock off
51 Pop's pop
52 Dance with a lowered pole
53 Irish patriot Robert
54 Old autocrats
55 To-do
56 Building block
57 From the thrift store, perhaps
58 On this very spot
59 Yoked beasts
60 Jackie's second

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

S	E	L	F	■	P	O	T	S	■	M	O	I	S	T
M	A	Y	A	■	R	U	S	E	■	O	U	N	C	E
E	C	R	U	■	E	S	A	U	■	O	R	L	O	P
W	H	E	N	A	P	E	R	S	O	N	■	A	N	I
■	■	■	A	M	A	■	■	S	P	L	A	Y	E	D
A	L	I	■	A	R	Y	L	■	A	I	R	■	■	■
S	A	Y	S	H	E	W	I	L	L	T	H	I	N	K
T	I	R	E	■	■	C	E	O	■	■	A	D	E	N
I	T	O	V	E	R	A	N	D	L	E	T	Y	O	U
■	■	■	E	R	A	■	S	E	A	T	■	L	S	T
T	R	A	N	S	I	T	■	■	S	T	S	■	■	■
R	E	B	■	K	N	O	W	Y	O	U	K	N	O	W
A	M	A	T	I	■	N	E	E	R	■	A	C	H	E
P	I	T	O	N	■	G	R	A	D	■	T	A	M	P
S	T	E	R	E	■	S	E	R	A	■	E	A	S	T

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10/13/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You want success. You work very hard to achieve your goals. You take your career and your public reputation very seriously. (You know how to be tough if necessary.) You have high standards for yourself. Being a perfectionist, you often master a particular technology. You're skilled with words. Work hard this year for rewards in 2007.
Birthdate of: Paul Simon, musician; Kelly Preston, actress; Sacha Baron Cohen, comedian.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a wonderful day to schmooze with friends. Partners are particularly sympathetic to you. You can definitely bridge the gap in troubled relationships

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): If you have an opportunity to help a coworker today, by all means, do so. Someone needs your support and sympathy. This makes others treat you with increased respect and gratitude.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a marvelous day for romance! New love will begin for some of you. Accept party invitations. Enjoy good times with friends. It's a beautifully social day!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Entertain at home. Invite the gang over. People feel very warm and friendly to each other today. It's also a great day to make where you live look more beautiful. (Buy something special.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Discussions with siblings and relatives are heartfelt, warm and friendly today. There's an easy give-and-take in all your conversations with others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): If you want to buy something beautiful and luxurious, this is certainly the day to do it. You're in the mood to reward yourself and others as well.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You'll enjoy all kinds of social occasions today. Others find you to be diplomatic and charming. Accept all invitations. Romance can definitely blossom today!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Because you feel unusually selfless today, you're willing to work on behalf of others. You understand that true generosity is giving what is needed. (Who can argue with that?)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might have an opportunity to join forces with others today to perform an act of charity. You're certainly sympathetic to the needs of those who are less fortunate.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good day to ask important people (bosses, parents and VIPs) for whatever you want. Others are inclined to meet you more than halfway. Go for the brass ring—what's to lose?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your appreciation of beauty is heightened today. Visit places that allow you to experience this. Go to a park; visit a museum or art gallery—whatever you like.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Someone is definitely helpful to you today. In fact, you've been on the receiving end of generosity from others lately. Since what goes around comes around, remember to pass this on.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

6			8		5		2	
	1		6					7
					7			
8	5					7		3
3		2					1	9
			2					
2					8		4	
	4		7		9			5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

10/13

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

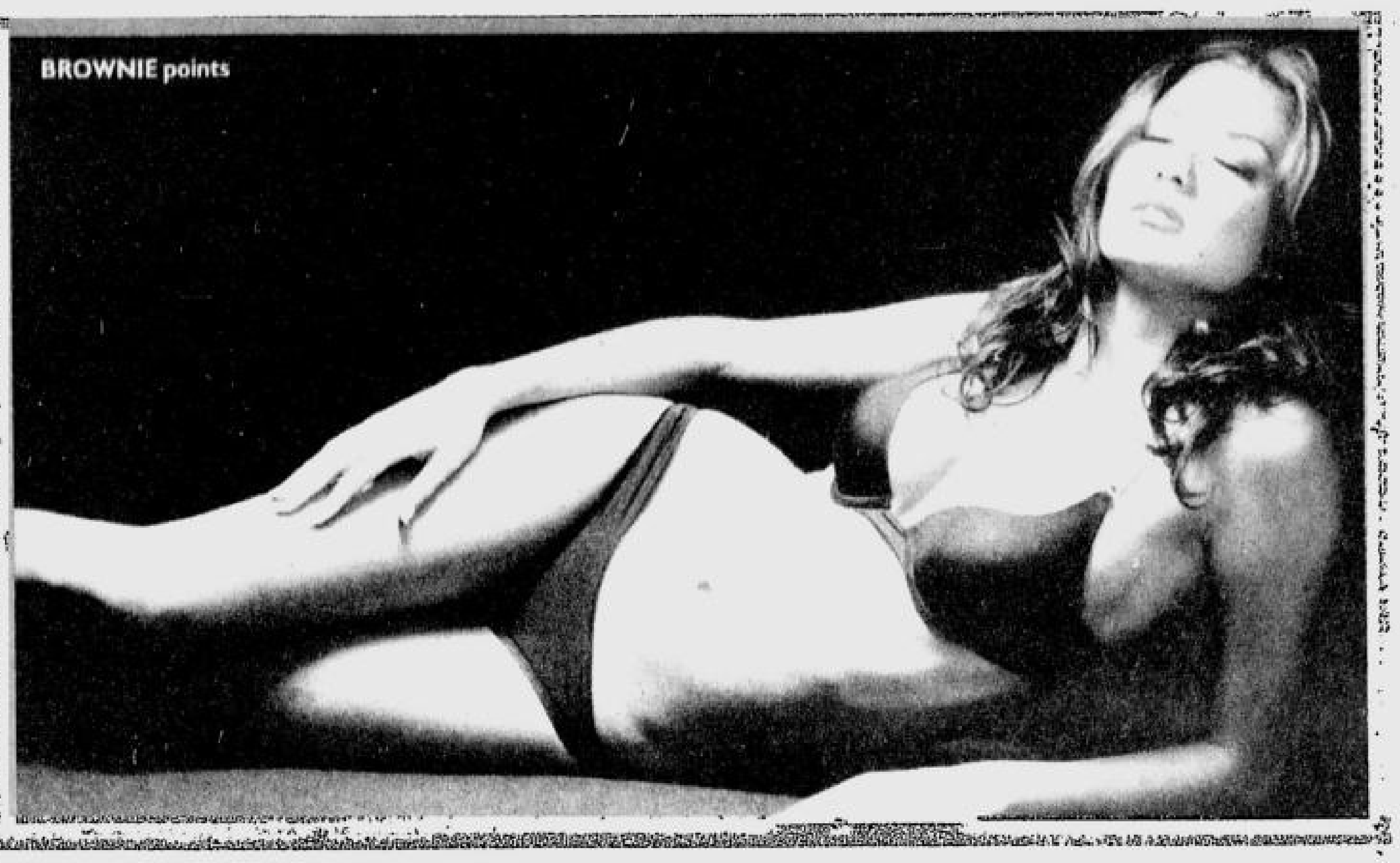
Answer to previous puzzle

5	8	9	1	3	7	6	4	2
7	2	4	5	6	9	8	3	1
6	1	3	4	2	8	7	9	5
9	6	2	3	8	1	5	7	4
1	7	5	2	4	6	3	8	9
3	4	8	7	9	5	1	2	6
2	3	1	8	5	4	9	6	7
8	9	7	6	1	2	4	5	3
4	5	6	9	7	3	2	1	8

Difficulty Level ★★★

YOU'RE my baby...

PRINT it in pink!



BROWNIE points

Hot Secret

Hot Pink is a lingerie brand carrying locally manufactured products made of imported material from Hong Kong and Europe

By Ria Prieto

SHOPPING, IN A LOT OF WAYS, IS THERApeutic. My friends know that I'm not feeling too well when I start buying stuff I really don't need. These items will be in their plastic bags, still with their tags on, for about six months until I finally take the time to look at what I have "emotionally purchased," and try to decipher if I really need them or they're better off with a friend.

One place I enjoy going to is Hot Pink, a lingerie brand carrying locally manufactured products made of imported material from Hong Kong and Europe. Basic underwear like bras and panties, sexy lingerie like lace chemises, cami sets, baby dolls, and slips, comfortable sleepwear like cotton and silk pajamas can be found in this very pretty store in Rockwell.

I've noticed that when I get these "I need to buy something" episodes, the stuff I purchase from Hot Pink are the ones I get to use, and I never feel bad about purchasing them since they're well-priced, comfortable and stylishly fun. I know I'm talking about underwear and articles that won't be seen by the public, but at least if I have to be brought to the emergency room, I won't be embarrassed being seen in my underwear.

The underwear you choose should be dependent on the clothes you most often wear. I love Hot Pink's boy shorts because I am mostly in jeans and I have just a couple of thongs in basic colors for clothes that are snug, so my underwear won't mark. The store carries bras made of different fabrics; T-shirt bras are a favorite.

I can't have enough of their cotton pajamas either, and since they have something new every three months, I have no problem checking out the shop.

Picking the right bra

I read somewhere that 80 percent of women wear the wrong size of bra. This can't be good for the breasts, especially if the bra is too tight. Remember that the band size or chest size is the number, while the cup size is the letter. It is advisable to get a measuring tape and measure around your chest to get the right size. To get the right cup size, however, remember that bras are for support. There shouldn't be too much space, and yet they shouldn't also be too tight.

If you have large sagging breasts, remember to pull up your bra strap. Sometimes that's the only thing you need to do to make your breasts look perkier and fuller.

It is helpful to try different styles. Every style fits and fills differently, so your breasts actually may look better in other styles. When buying, it would be good to bring a snug shirt so you can spot the difference.

More than anything, keep in mind that your bra should not be painful or uncomfortable. If it is, throw it away and rush to Hot Pink to get fitted properly.

We may not have Victoria's Secret, but we do have a store that is hot, exciting and less expensive. It will be worth your time to visit, and good for your "inner peace."

Hot Pink is available at Independent Lifestyle Section Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, and Rustan's

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Reference: E. Thom J Int Med Res 2000: 28:229-233.

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* Based on the study "A Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Trial of a New Weight-reducing Agent of Natural Origin" conducted by Dr. Erling Thom in Norway, published in The Journal of International Medical Research 2000;28:229-233.

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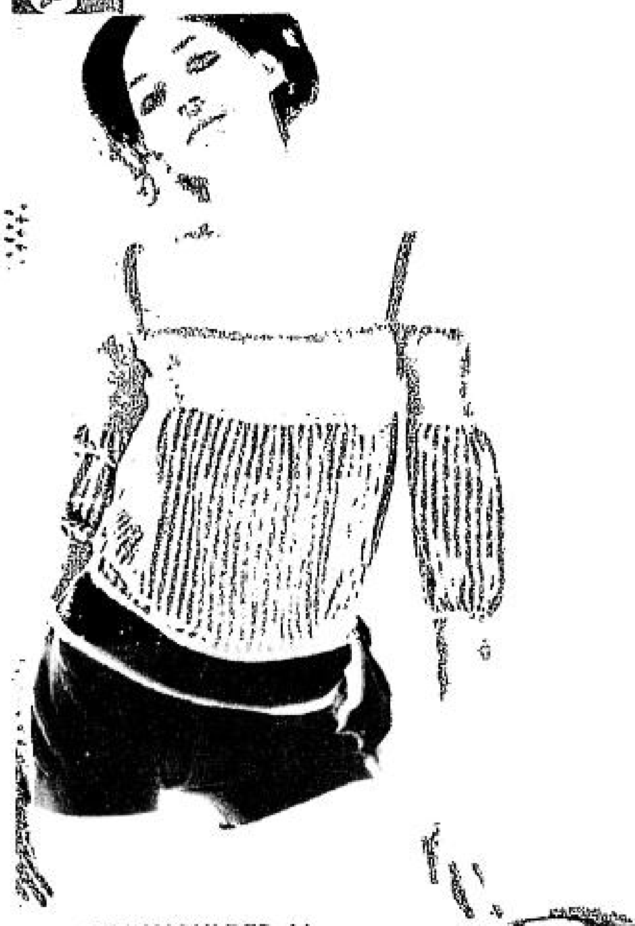


OFF-SHOULDER chic

HAUTE halter

PHOTOGRAPHY SARA BLACK
MAKEUP XENG ZULUETA
FOR SHU UEMURA
HAIR BENJIE ANGELES
FOR KIEHL'S STYLIST SERIES
MODEL GRACE TAGLE
CLOTHES TAN-GAN

BABY-DOLL beaute

Creative Knits

FASHION FLASH

FOR OVER 20 YEARS NOW, designer Lulu Tan-Gan has made knitwear a hot commodity in our warm weather. That's no small feat in a country where people choose to wear the lightest garments possible to keep their cool. Her secret—mastering the art of designing and manufacturing tropical weight knits. If there's anything anyone says about her clothes, it's that they're light and sexy.

Today she's brought the Tan-Gan label 10 notches higher, taking the company from being a chain of designer retail stores to becoming a design house. Leading a creative team composed of an assistant designer, marketing/PR manager and technician, Tan Gan, in her new role as creative director, is taking her brand to newly diversified heights.

Part and parcel of her grand plan is to regularly give her clients a fresh take on the merchandise. Every designer has his or her signature style, but the output of two artists working together is another force to reckon with (think Takashi Murakami and Marc Jacobs, Jeffrey Fulvimari and Anna Sui). If anything, the merchandise becomes a novel commodity that piques the market's interest in fashion as art.

This is also why capsule collections have become a growing trend in the international retail scene. Karl Lagerfeld and Stella McCartney have both worked with chic and cheap H&M. High-street boutiques like Topshop and Debenhams have tapped into the pool of local British designers like Preen, Ann-Sofie Back, Markus Lupfer and Julien McDonald. Even Kate Moss is supposedly working on a collection for the former.

Following in the footsteps of these successful global brands, Tan-Gan has begun collaborating with fresh Filipino talent, starting with a small lineup of men's pullovers, cardigans and scarves designed by Ivarluski Aseron to relaunch TG Men. Since then, she's asked Puey Quiñones to co-design a limited-edition men's line in time for the holidays.

She's recently taken young designer Solenn Heussaff under her wing. Fresh from studies at Studio Berçot in Paris, Heusaff began designing for the label in summer 2006.

"Her clothes are just what our clients want and need," says Tan-Gan of her protégé. "Her designs are feminine but her taste is also very edgy. It's a sweet, wearable style but it's not too frou-frou, which is better for knits."

The half-French Heussaff's education at Berçot has instilled a work ethic and design style that's intrinsically Gallic.

"She's very disciplined but also maintains a freestyling design technique," describes Tan-Gan.

Her styles are simple yet it's her detailing that makes her pieces truly interesting. She's taken Tan-Gan's signature draped knits and fashioned them into today's crowd favorites: polo shirts, wrap tops, blousons, and trendy dresses. It's very much in tune with today's clamor for chic casual comfort. But true to form, the brand lends the luxury of its hand-loomed knits to even the sparest of designs.

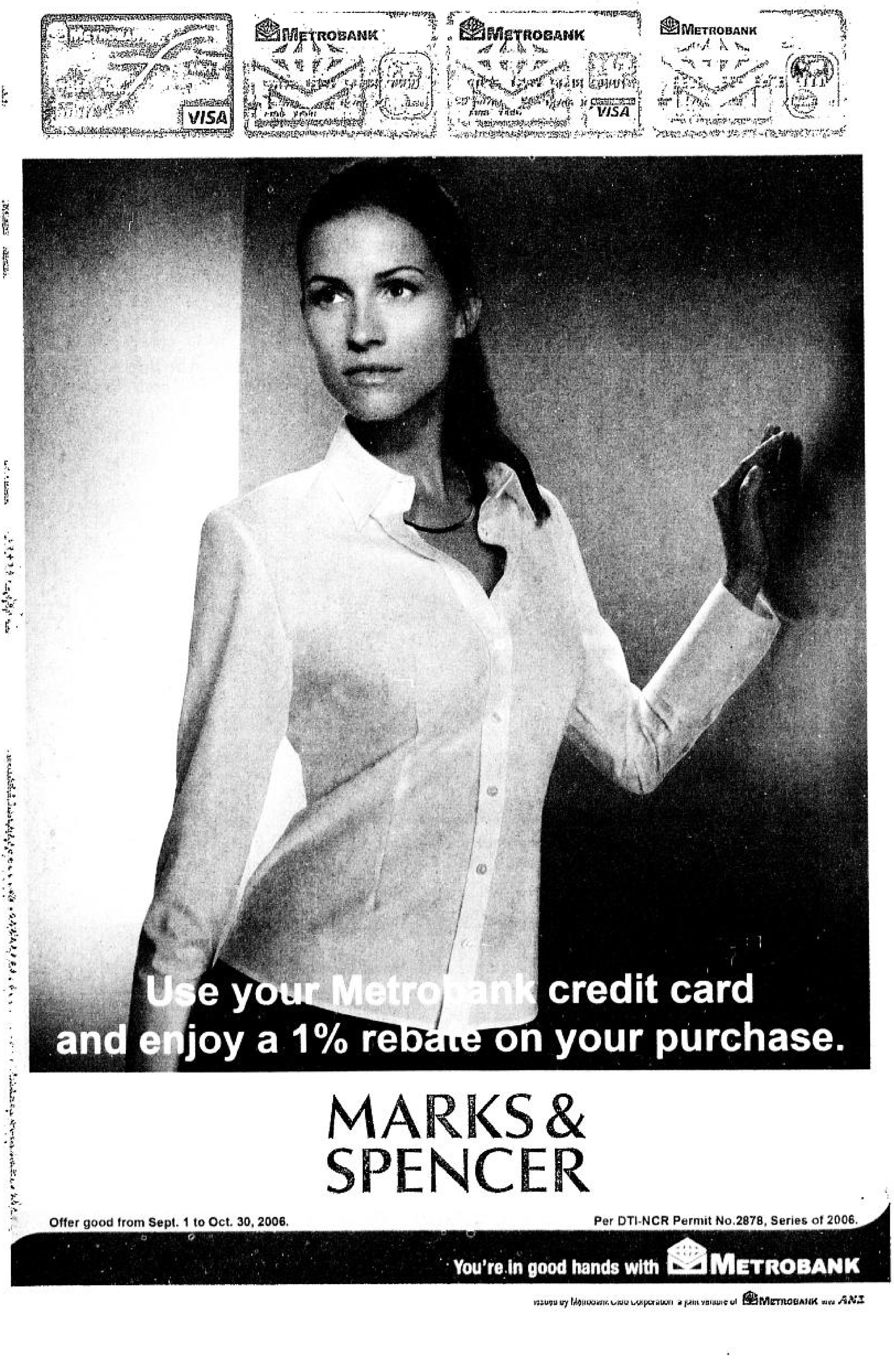
So what can we all look forward to? A lot of pretty clothes to play dress up with, naturally. The design duo has taken the Filipina favorite—the twin set—and brought some fun to its prim frame. The styles are all certified for the boardroom but still hot enough to take out at night.

With more places to go and things to do, Filipina women need fuss-free dresses that have the right pinch of flair. Knit dresses in every length and for every occasion will be hitting the racks to cater to every woman's need and budget.

A lot of new and exciting things are happening for this long-standing brand. It's best to keep your senses keen so as not to miss out on anything. *JE*

Tan-Gan boutiques are at SM Megamall A, SM Manila and SM North Edsa Annex. It is also located at the following department stores: SM Megamall, SM North Edsa, SM Makati, Landmark and Mall of Asia. Call 7532654.

TEAM KNIT Lulu Tan-Gan and Solenn Heusaff



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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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DANIEL RADCLIFFE (center) as Harry Potter, with Rupert Grint as Ron Weasley and Emma Watson as Hermione Granger

A London visit to 'Harry Potter 5' set and a talk with 'The Queen'

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—WE WISHED we had a camera on our recent visit to the set of "Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix."

Huddled together in a huge open space of the 200-plus acre Leavesden Studios, about an hour's ride by bus from London, were figures that at first glance looked like **Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint** and their "Order of Phoenix" cast mates: **Matthew Lewis, Bonnie Wright** and **Evana Lynch.** But they were not. They were the stand-ins of the young actors and actresses but it was quite a sight. These substitutes, who stand in for the actors before filming for technical purposes (like during the lighting set-up), were of course chosen for having the same skin tone, hair color, height and build as the actual cast. So it was like seeing a set of clones while the real Daniel and company were filming a scene inside a set structure. As usual, taking pictures on the set was strictly forbidden so it was too bad that we couldn't capture for posterity this set of stand-ins who were dressed exactly the way the real actors were. Rupert's substitute had the flaming red hair, too. Incidentally, director **David Yates** is such a perfectionist that he did so many takes of one scene involving Harry and his "Dumbledore's Army." By the day's end, we could recite all the lines in this scene—and in the voices of the cast.

RADCLIFFE waves his wand in the fifth Harry Potter movie.

We saw the Great Hall again but this time it was set for a breakfast scene to be filmed the following day. So the seemingly endless rows of tables were set with plates and real cutlery—not ordinary ones, mind you but gold-plated spoons, forks and knives. We imagined how much a spoon from one of the tables could fetch on eBay. Speaking of cutlery, we had lunch with the cast and crew at the commissary so on our way in, we saw Rupert and said hi to him as he ate just like one of the guys.

What was different on our second "Harry Potter" set visit was that we finally got to talk to **Katie Leung**, whose Cho Chang role was coveted by many girls from around the world, including Chinese-Filipinas who sent letters, photos and audition tapes to the producers. "I feel that I'm very lucky to be chosen out of so many girls," the Scottish-Chinese Katie told us. She gets to kiss Daniel in this fifth film adaptation of J.K. Rowling's phenomenally successful series of books. "Yes, Daniel is a very good kisser," Katie confirmed when asked. "Yeah, I really enjoyed it (the kiss)." We'll write more in the future about our interviews with Katie, Daniel (who confirmed that he will do a nude scene in "Equus" when he makes his West End debut next year), Rupert, Evana (as Luna Lovegood, she is the new girl in this movie; like Katie, she won the role over thousands of girls) and others. Other cast newcomers include **Imelda Staunton** (her Dolores Umbridge's fondness for pink inspired the motif of our set visit tent), **Helena Bonham Carter** and **George Harris.**

* * *

Back in LA, we interviewed "The Queen." Helen Mirren, that is. As Queen Elizabeth II in "The Queen," Helen is being hailed by critics as one of the frontrunners in the Best Actress race come awards season time.

And we agree.

In director **Stephen Frears**' excellent fictional account on what happened in the private chambers of the Royal Family and the British government after Princess Diana's sudden death, Helen has remarkably channeled the essence of England's monarch.

In person, especially as she appeared before us that afternoon, Helen is not the first actress we would think of to portray Her Highness. But with the help of a wig, frumpy costumes and her renowned acting talents, Helen is Queen Elizabeth on screen, down to the way she clutches her purse on certain occasions.

She won the Best Actress award for this role in last month's Venice Film Festival. The film also bagged Best Screenplay for **Peter Morgan** and the prestigious FIPRESCI/International Critics Prize for Best Film in the Competition, given by a jury of international critics.

Slim and impressively fit at 60, this former companion of actor **Liam Neeson** looks younger, especially with her short blonde hair.

Named a Dame of the British Empire in 2003, Helen, who met the real queen at a polo match, said that with her title role in "The Queen," "Maybe I'll never get to meet her again." But the movie is a fair, balanced portrayal of the Windors.

Aside from Helen, the movie also stars **Michael Sheen** (also dead-on as Prime Minister **Tony Blair**), **James Cromwell** (as Prince Philip, he tells the Queen in bed, "Move over, cabbage"), **Sylvia Syms** as the Queen Mother

A LONDON/ H2

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A London visit to 'Harry Potter 5' set . . .

From page H1

DIRECTOR Stephen Frears coaches Helen Mirren on the set of "The Queen."

(watch her say the word "celebrities"—the stars and designers who attended Princess Di's memorial service—as if it were a dirty word) and **Alex Jennings** as **Prince Charles.**

When Stephen Frears was asked how he guided Helen, he revealed, "When someone starts acting that well, you tend to keep your mouth shut because the last thing you want to do is to make her self-conscious. What you're really terrified of is actually disturbing the whole thing because you can see that what's coming out is very good."

Dame Helen has also portrayed Elizabeth I in a TV movie of the same name for which she recently won an Emmy Best Actress plum.

At last year's awards season red carpet action, Helen dutifully stood by as the wife of **Taylor Hackford**, director of the multi-nominated "Ray." Early next year, we predict that the couple will switch positions, with Helen in the spotlight as a Best Actress nominee and Taylor, on the sidelines.

How difficult was it to portray the Queen?

It was the most intimidating role I've ever played. Elizabeth I was also a big role, more emotional, but this was more frightening to me because she's so well-known. She's an icon all over the world. Everybody knows what she looks like, what she sounds like. I knew that I had to at least get those things right, and hopefully go way beyond the simple impersonation of the Queen.

Also, as you know, the British people have a very intense love-hate relationship with the monarchy and with this present royal family. It's a tense and an emotional relationship, so it's a dangerous subject to wander into as an actress. So I was very nervous at the thought of it.

Were you worried that this film might betray the Queen?

I think if it would, I wouldn't have done it. The film doesn't betray her. It's great that we have free speech, but within a free speech society, it's very easy to take cheap shots at people. But I felt the script was wonderfully sensitive. I thought it was funny, but human.

Did you meet the Queen when you were made a Dame in 2003?

Actually, I got my honor from Prince Charles, not from the Queen. Prince Charles also honors people. He was the person who did the ceremony. So I didn't get the Queen. I got Prince Charles.

When you read the scripts for Queens Elizabeth I and II, did you feel like saying, "I can do this," right away?

With Elizabeth I, I felt more like, "Oh, I can do this," because of the extreme breadth of her emotional journey. I loved that. But I also loved the challenge of portraying the interior nature of Elizabeth II—the fact that you've got little to work with in terms of expressing to the audience what you're feeling. With Elizabeth I, she says it. If she's angry, she shouts. If she's sad, she cries. With Elizabeth II, that's not the way she has ever been, even when she was a little girl. There was always a sense of self-control and discipline, a sense of responsibility and a sense of duty. So she's a very different personality. But I wanted to make her human to the audience. The Queen laughs. She makes jokes. She twinkles. I met her once in a fairly relaxed situation at a polo match. She would never remember (me). But she was immediately engaging and she wasn't the Queen we think of, this serious person. I saw a tiny suggestion of it (when I met her). I was desperate for (the essence of) that person to be on the screen.

When a portrait painter comes, the Queen is free with him, unlike Elizabeth I who was controlling about the image she presented. She hated having her portrait painted. The queen doesn't do that. She allows portrait painters to come in and do whatever they like. She lets people see what they see in her.

How did you research to come up with this portrayal?

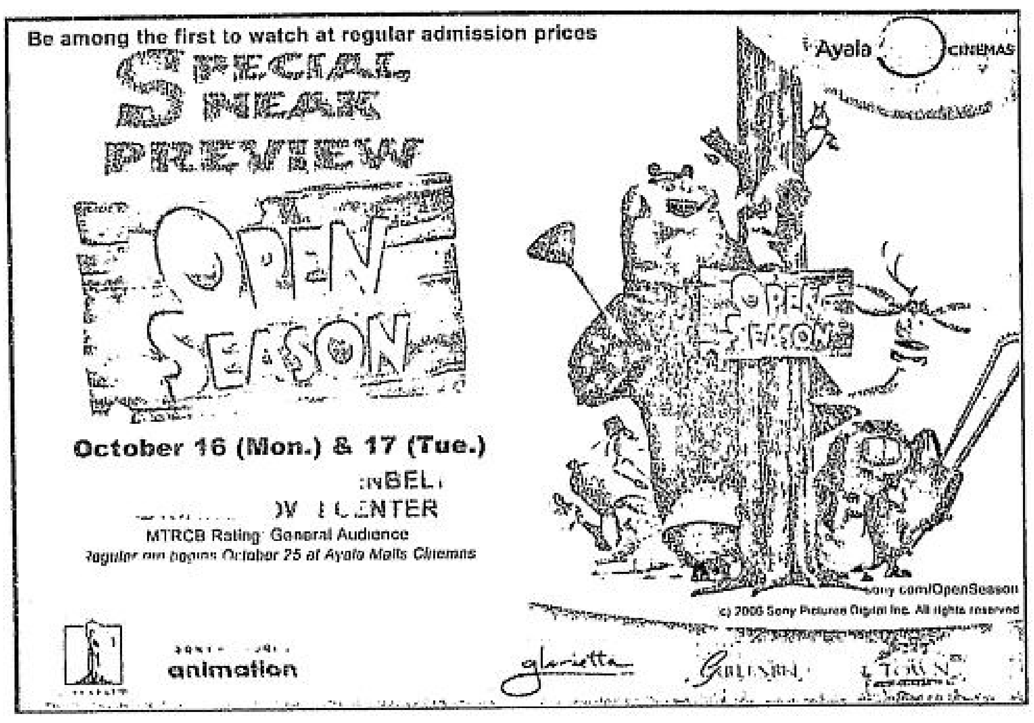
I watched all the films and read all the books I could get my hands on. There's very little film of the Queen where she's not self-conscious. She's either in her role as a monarch or she's self-conscious because she's being filmed having breakfast. The book I found most useful was a book the royal family hated because it was their first betrayal. It was called "The Little Princesses" by **Marion Crawford,** her nanny. Princess Margaret and Elizabeth had a nanny up to the time when they came into young womanhood. This woman looked after them. She had a really intimate understanding of these girls.

The book is out of print now. But I found a copy. I found that book very valuable although it was extremely sycophantic and very much of its era. Nonetheless, it had a real indication of the character of Elizabeth.

Did you also talk to anyone close to the Queen?

I didn't talk to anyone who knew her closely. I think this whole thing of the Queen being cold and withholding to

A LONDON/ H4



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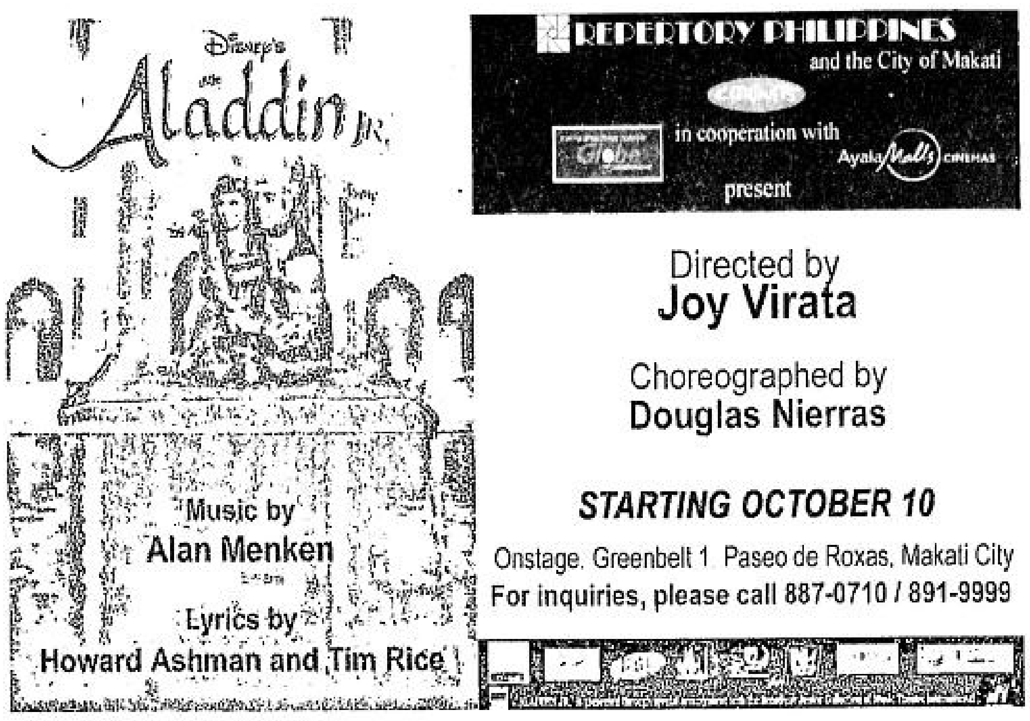

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Lyrics by
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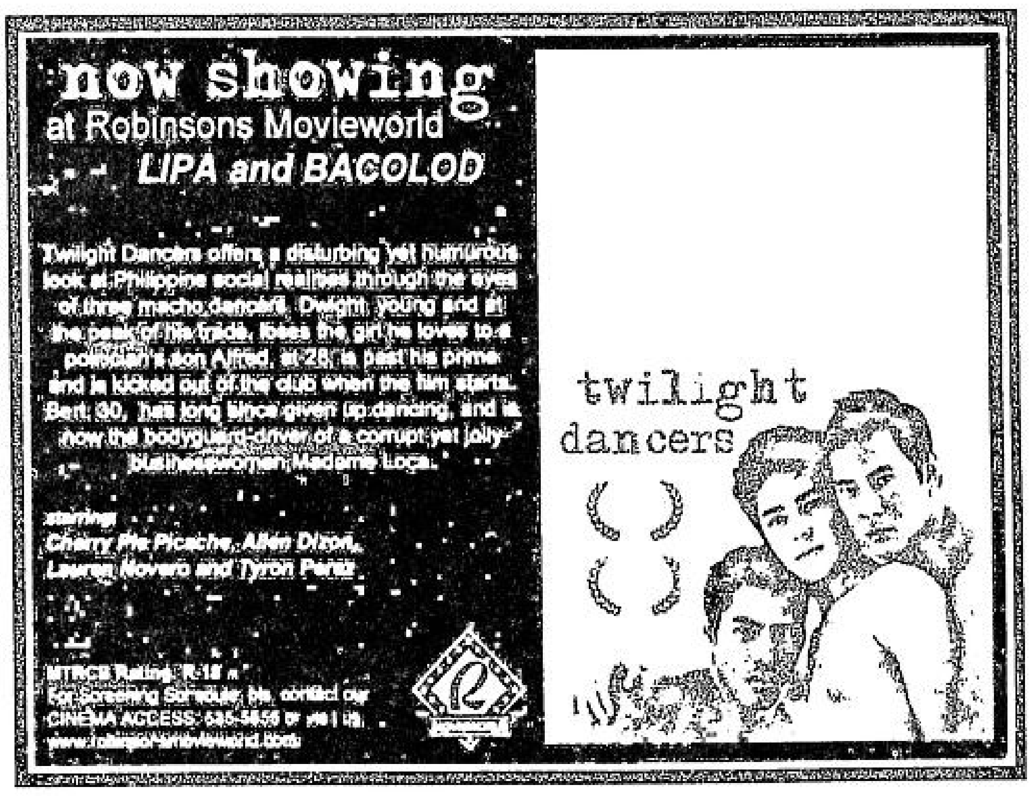

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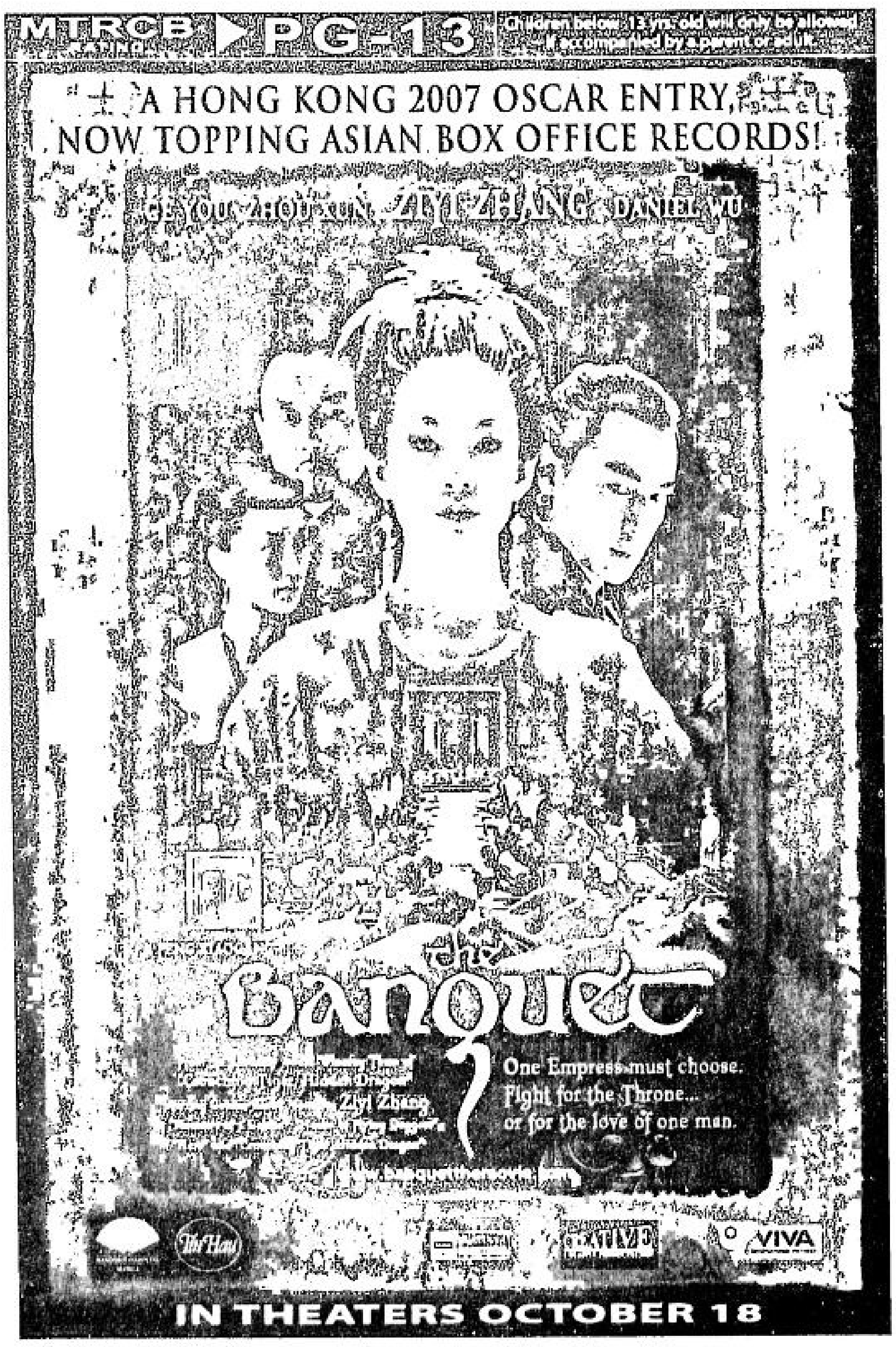
starring:
Cherry Pie Picache, Allen Dizon, Lauren Novero and Tyron Perez
MTRCB Rating: R-18
For Screening Schedule, pls. contact our CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5656 or
twilight dancers



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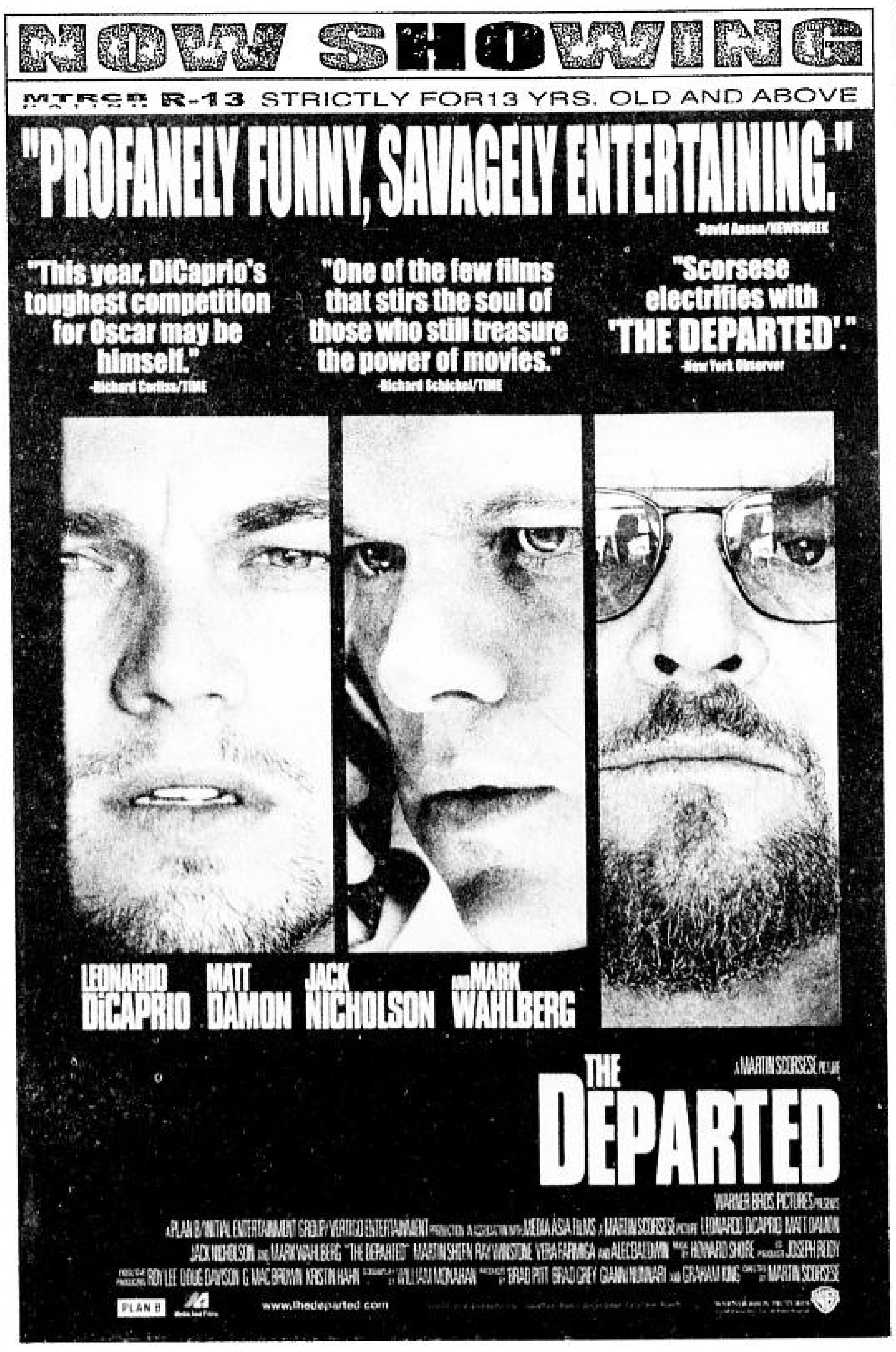

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THE DEPARTED
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On-air Ninja lessons

NINJA CLASSES AND LESSONS ON MARtial arts discipline air on Disney Channel this month.

Every Thursday and Friday at 4 p.m., "Shuriken School" tells the story of 10-year-old hero Eizan Kaburagi and his first year at Ninja school.

Like any typical naughty kid, Eizan often faces off with bullies and slugs it out with kids from a rival school.

During trainings, Eizan and best friends Jimmy B. and Okuni learn over-the-top tricks and stunts such as melting into walls, flying over rooftops, disappearing in a cloud of smoke and moving as stealthily as an invisible cat.

KID FIT

Nick invades schools

"Nick Takes Over Your School," a nationwide program dedicated to promoting fun, sportsmanship, team spirit and fitness among grade school students, has chosen to visit schools in Metro Manila and Baguio.

From October to December, Nickelodeon will be in San Beda College-Alabang, Claret School of Quezon City, Our Lady of Grace Montessori School and Colleges, UNO High School, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Montessori and St. Louis University in Baguio City.

Nick fans will have the opportunity to meet and greet their favorite Nicktoon characters live.

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

THE GUARDIAN PG13 1:35,4:25,7:15,10:05	MY FIRST WEDDING PG13 1:25,3:35,5:45, 7:55,10:05	BARNYARD G 1:30,3:40,5:50, 8:00,10:10
THE DEPARTED R13 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30	THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING 2:00,4:00,6.00, 8:00,10:00	THE GUARDIAN PG13 2:00,4:50,7:40,10:30

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440-41
MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – FREE SEATING – MONDAY-FRIDAY

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 THE GUARDIAN
MTRCB PG-13
1.00, 4.00, 7.00, 10.00

2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
MTRCB R-13
12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7.30, 10.00

3 TILL I MET YOU
MTRCB GP
12.20, 2.45, 5.10, 7:35, 10.00

4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
MTRCB R 18
1.05, 3.15, 5.30, 7.45, 10.00

PREMIERE THEATRE
THE DEPARTED
MTRCB R-13
12.30, 3.40, 6.50, 10.00

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CINEMA 2 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12:45, 2:50, 4:55, 7:00, 9:00 R18

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 THE BARNYARD
11:20, 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55 GP

CINEMA 4 TILL I MET YOU
10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 PG-13

CINEMA 5 THE GUARDIAN
10:40, 1:40, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 PG-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES CALL: 722-4496

MUSIC MUSEUM

OCT 13 2006	GENESIS, ZAZA'S, TRUEFAITH, [illegible]	8:00 PM
OCT 20 & 21 2006	GARY V @ 23 "THE REPEAT"	8:00 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY	CERRUDO CLASSICO	8:00PM
OCT. 12, 19, 26, 2006	ISAY ALVAREZ & ROBERT SENA	8:30 PM
OCT. 14, 21, 2006	AYEN LAUREL & RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:00 PM

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1	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 2:00, 4:10, 6:25, 8:40, 10:55 R-18
2	THE GUARDIAN 2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:10 PG-13
3	THE DEPARTED 1:55, 5:05, 8:15, 11:15 R-13
4	TILL I MET YOU 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00 G

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
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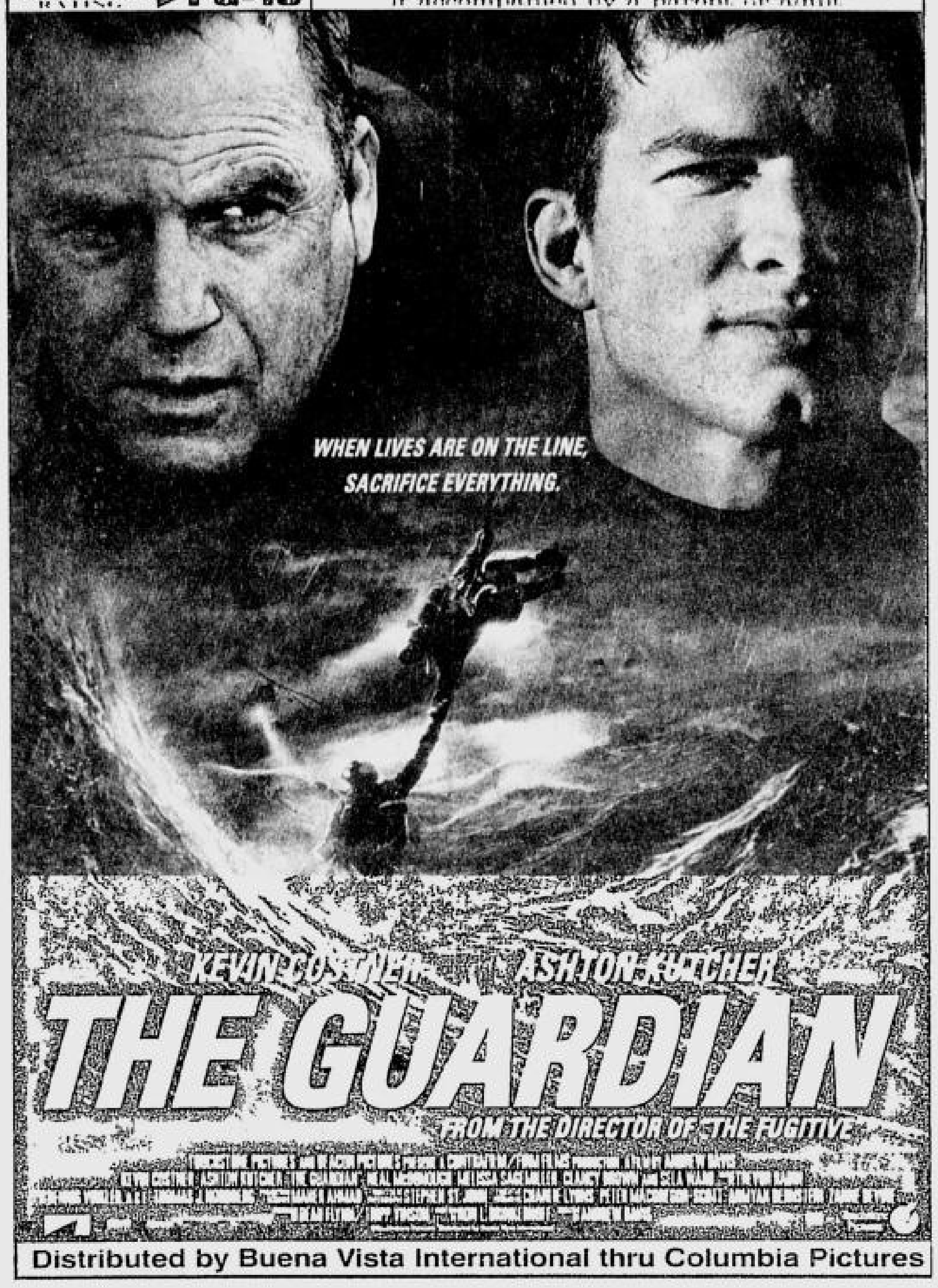

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PULSE 1:30 / 3:35 / 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50	THE DEPARTED 12:10 / 3:20 / 6:30 / 9:40	TALLADEGA NIGHTS 7:00 / 9:30	
MY FIRST WEDDING 40 / 3:40 / 5:40 / 7:40 / 9:40	FIRST DAY HIGH 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30	DEAD OR ALIVE 1:00 / 3:00 / 5:00	THE GUARDIAN 12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

TILL I MET YOU 12:10 R3 / 1:45 / 4:00 / 6:15 / 8:30	THE GUARDIAN 12:10 R3 / 2:20 / 5:10 / 8:00	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 12:00 R3 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05 / 8:20
DEAD OR ALIVE 12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00	MY FIRST WEDDING 12:40 / 2:40 / 4:40 / 5:40 / 8:40	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
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CINEPLEX
1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
PREMIERE
THE DEPARTED

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
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1 THE DEPARTED
2 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GUARDIAN

starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GUARDIAN
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 THE PULSE

THEATRES
SNAKE ON THE PLANE
TILL I MET YOU
3 ZOOM

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena tel (042) 660-[illegible]
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
RESERVED
RESERVED

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1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 PULSE
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 THE DEPARTED
5 MY FIRST WEDDING
6 THE GUARDIAN
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 DEAD OR ALIVE
9 YOU ME & DUPREE
10 TILL I MET YOU

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
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2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 RESERVED

MARKETPLACE
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2 ZOOM
3 SNAKE ON A PLANE
4 RESERVED

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1 TILL I MET YOU
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TILL I MET YOU

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 THE GUARDIAN
2 POSSESSED BY EVIL
3 THE BREED
4 TILL I MET YOU

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
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2 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

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2 THE GUARDIAN
3 THE DEPARTED
4 TILL I MET YOU

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2 THE GUARDIAN
3 SNAKE ON A PLANE
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE
3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 STEP UP

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 SNAKE ON A PLANE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
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2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795 3320
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 FLY BOYS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 NAKED EYE
3 PERLAS
4 SOUND OF THUNDER

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 TILL I MET YOU
2 WILD ORCHIDS
3 SNAKE ON A PLANE
4 ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
5 THE GUARDIAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 TWILIGHT DANCERS
2 THE WICKER MAN
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 TILL I MET YOU

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030, 879.2029
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 DOS EKIS

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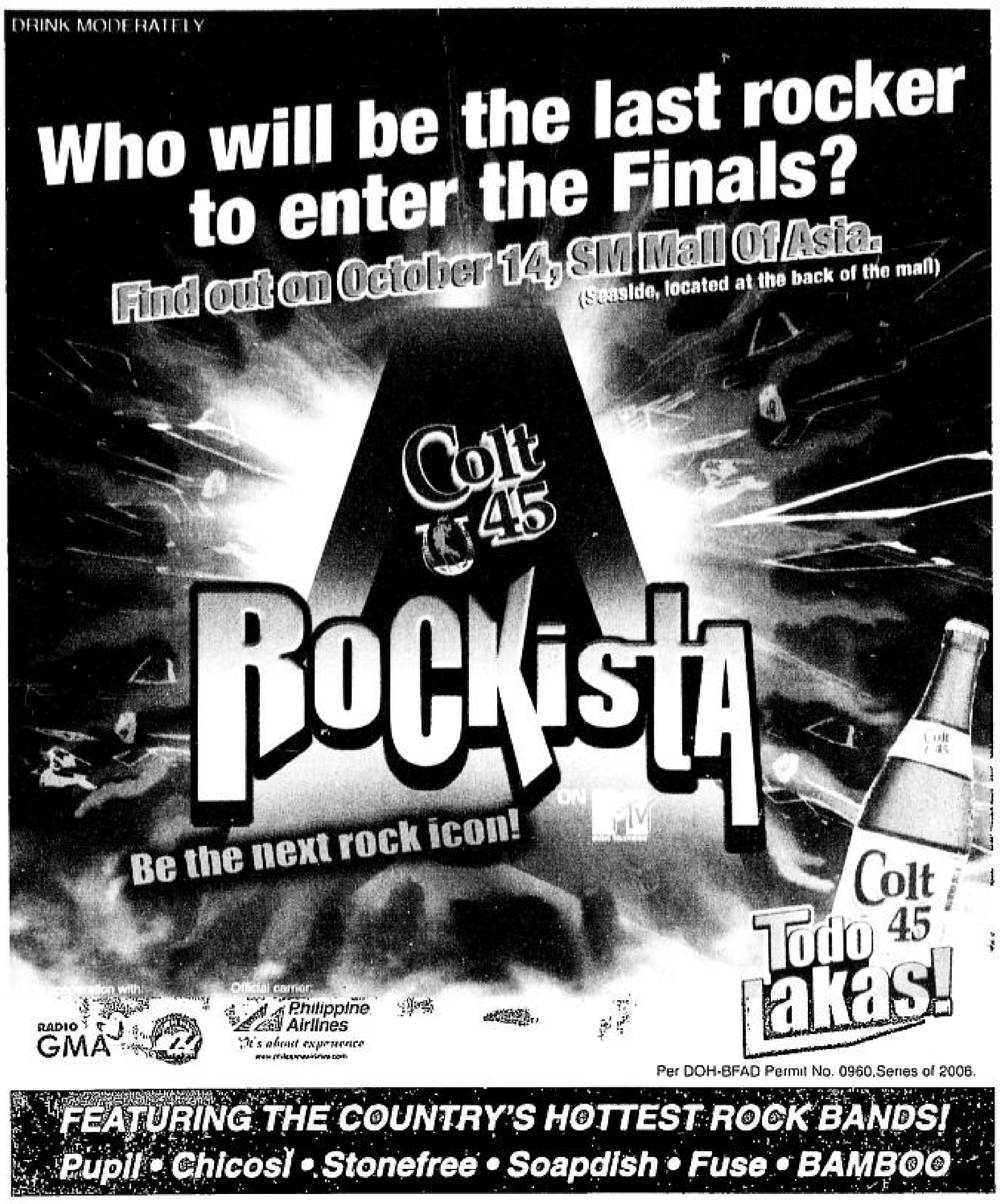

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DAME Helen Mirren in character as the Queen: "I believe in nobility of character."

A London visit to 'Harry Potter 5' set and a talk . . .

From page H2

her family is absolute bullshit. The only time I've seen Princess Anne really angry was when she was being interviewed. A suggestion had been made that her mother was cold, withholding and had not been a good mother. She said the Queen was very loving.

In watching all the films about the Queen, what did you learn about her, physically?

Looking at all the films about her, there's always this sort of gravity about her that sometimes translates into grumpiness because of the way her face settles. I loathe it when people come up to me and say, "Oh, cheer up, love" (laughter). I'm perfectly happy, thank you very much. I think the same thing happens with the Queen.

What's your personal view of the Queen these days?

The two weeks that this film deals with was a huge drama and an incredibly difficult time for the royal family. But these typhoons have come and passed and they're still left standing there at the end, when the dust has settled. Certainly the queen now is loved and appreciated. But at that time, she was vilified and maybe even hated.

I didn't go either way. I didn't vilify her. Luckily, in those two weeks, I wasn't in England. I was in America. So I looked at it through the lens of American media, which I think was healthy.

What was your opinion about the royal family's reaction to the events immediately after Princess Diana's death?

I didn't have an opinion then. I wasn't one of those people who said, "Oh, they should have the flag at half-mast. Oh, why don't they come down to London?" I didn't think it was my business. They must have been going through a terrible trauma. Because Diana was very difficult as far as the royal family was concerned. And all of a sudden, the whole thing is turned upside down because suddenly Diana is a martyr and a saint.

I think they made mistakes. There may have been residual resentment reasons as well. Thanks to Tony Blair—it was maybe his finest hour—they did the right thing in the end that made everyone relax and get over it. That was basically the speech that she came down from Balmoral (the Windsors' summer getaway) for.

Why do you think the Queen did not foresee the fallout upon Princess Diana's death?

She's not image-conscious in that way. I think the one thing that's an anathema to the Queen is the sense of performance, of being a puppet. There was a time when she was in Balmoral. They wanted her to appear on the balcony and wave to the people. They wanted her to come down from Balmoral. She said, "No, I can't do that because I'm not staying in Buckingham Palace." They closed Buckingham Palace for the summer. "I'll be lying. It would be a performance because I'm not there."

The Queen is not interested in "image" at all. I don't think she has any interest in what she's wearing.

Do you think about what you might say to the Queen when you meet her again?

Yes, I do think about that. Maybe now I'll never get to meet her again (laughter). It's not that I met her often before. Nothing would hugely change in my life. It wasn't like I was being invited to the Buckingham Palace every two minutes. I certainly wasn't.

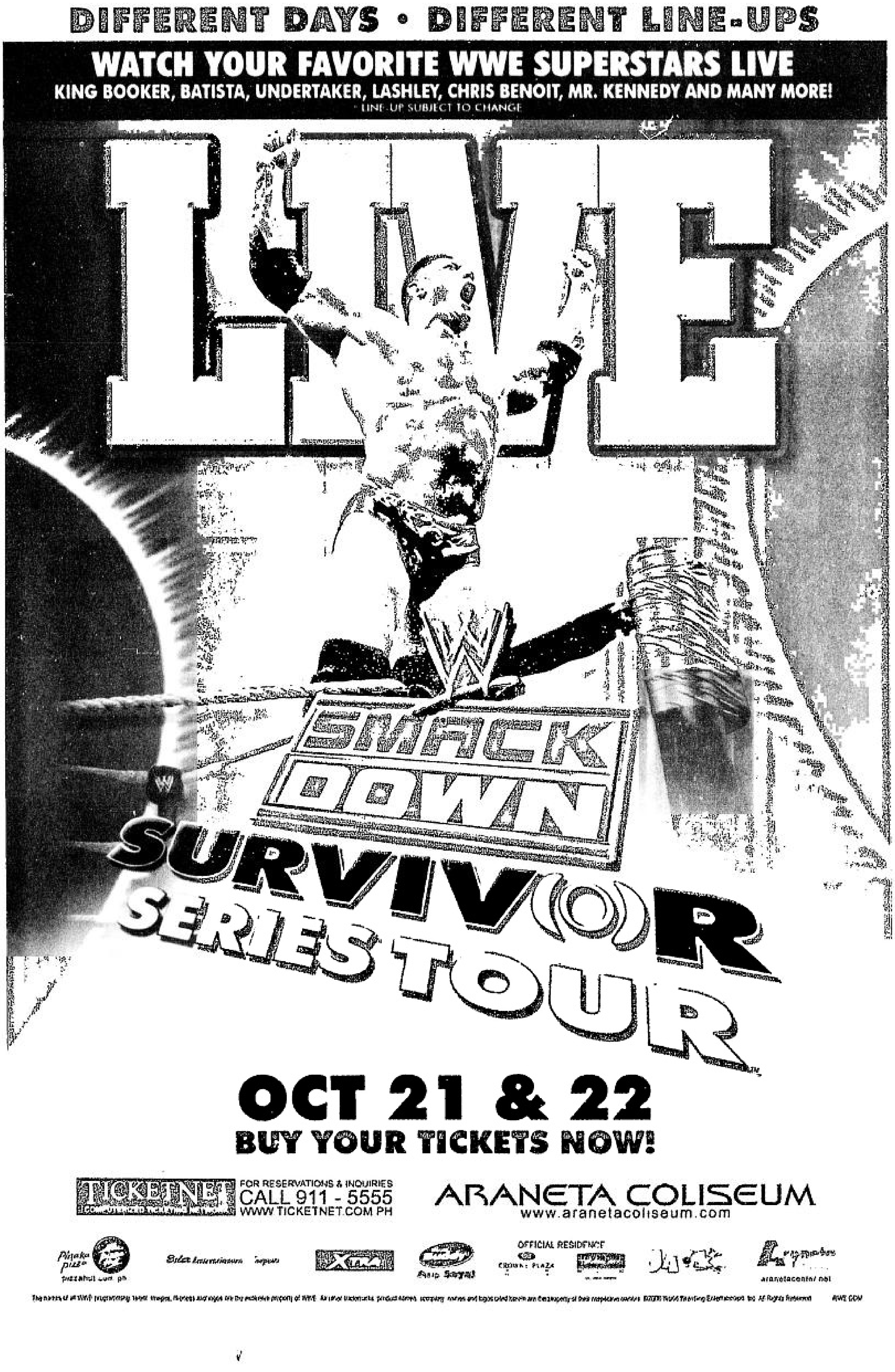
Do you have any noble ancestry?

My noble Russian ancestry (laughter). It (nobility) just comes out. There's nothing I can do about it. My great grandmother was a countess. No, I'm half-Russian. I would say it's my bottom half that's Russian (laughter). Because it definitely looks Russian. I'm also half-English working-class so I hope that's also present in my personality. I'm not a great believer in class or aristocracy. I believe in nobility of character.

So the Queen drives, as shown in the film?

Yes, of course, especially in Balmoral. During the war, she did train as a car mechanic so she can actually mend cars and drive them. She learned how to strip down an engine and put it back together again.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.



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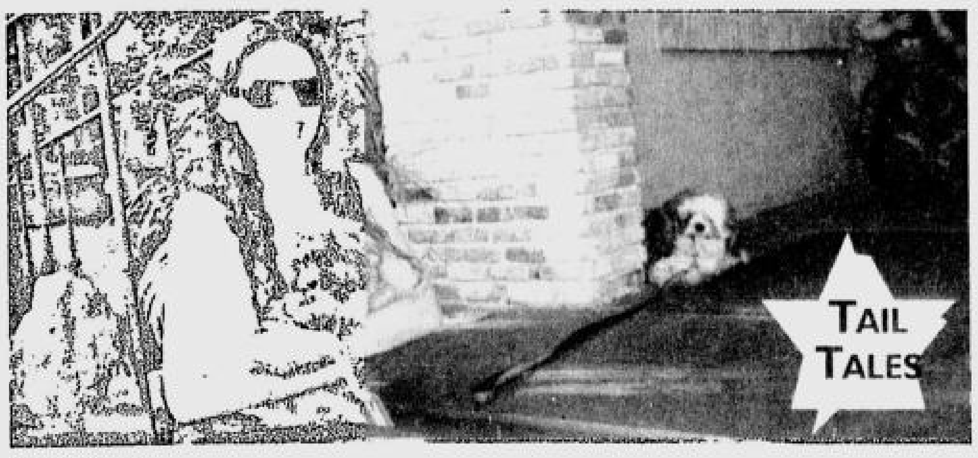
LIVING Stars

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

PARTY! PARTY!

Bong's double shebang

Show biz bigwigs gathered at the Heritage Hotel to greet Sen. Bong Revilla a happy 40th. This photo shows action star Rudy Fernandez partying with (from left) Lani Mercado, Phillip Salvador, Bong and sons Jolo and Bryan. Bong's second celebration in Cavite was attended by a cast of thousands—his constituents, colleagues and President Macapagal-Arroyo. ***More photos on page 14.***



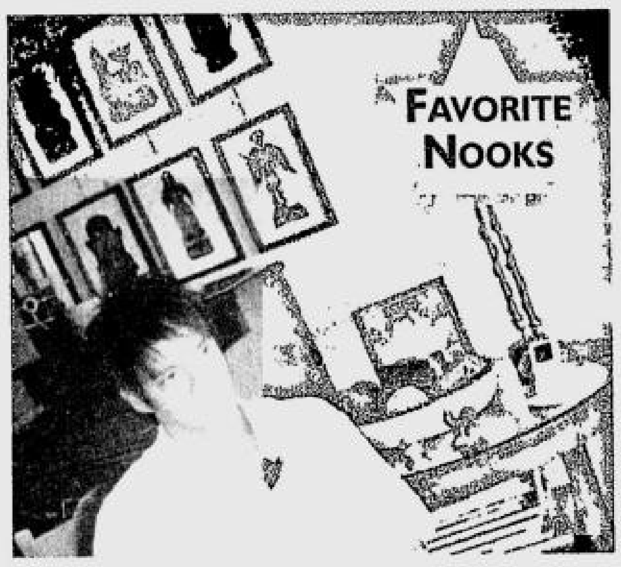
KARYLLE

I love my dogs. Kung Fu is two years old, while his puppy Jack is four months old. They belong to the Shih Tzu breed. Last Sunday, I took them around The Fort. Last Tuesday, we were at Tiendesitas in Eastwood. It's nice to bring them there. The kids shriek when they see the dogs.

Their vet says it's okay to feed them table food. That's why they're so fat. My dad trims their fur, but we take them to the groomer when their fur gets really tangled.

I pamper them by making sure they have really nice clothes. Kung Fu and I will be part of a fashion show, titled "Paws" on Oct. 21, 5 p.m., at the Mall of Asia.

Marinel R. Cruz



BIMBO CERRUDO

I spend my mornings and late evenings in the living room—relaxing, meditating, reading books, sipping wine, while listening to classical or new age music. I get most of my ideas for spiels and shows, while sitting in the bishop's chair, which is almost a hundred years old and was from Arayat, Pampanga. The room is decorated with paintings of angels by Claude Tayag. It's as if I'm in my own little bubble here. *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

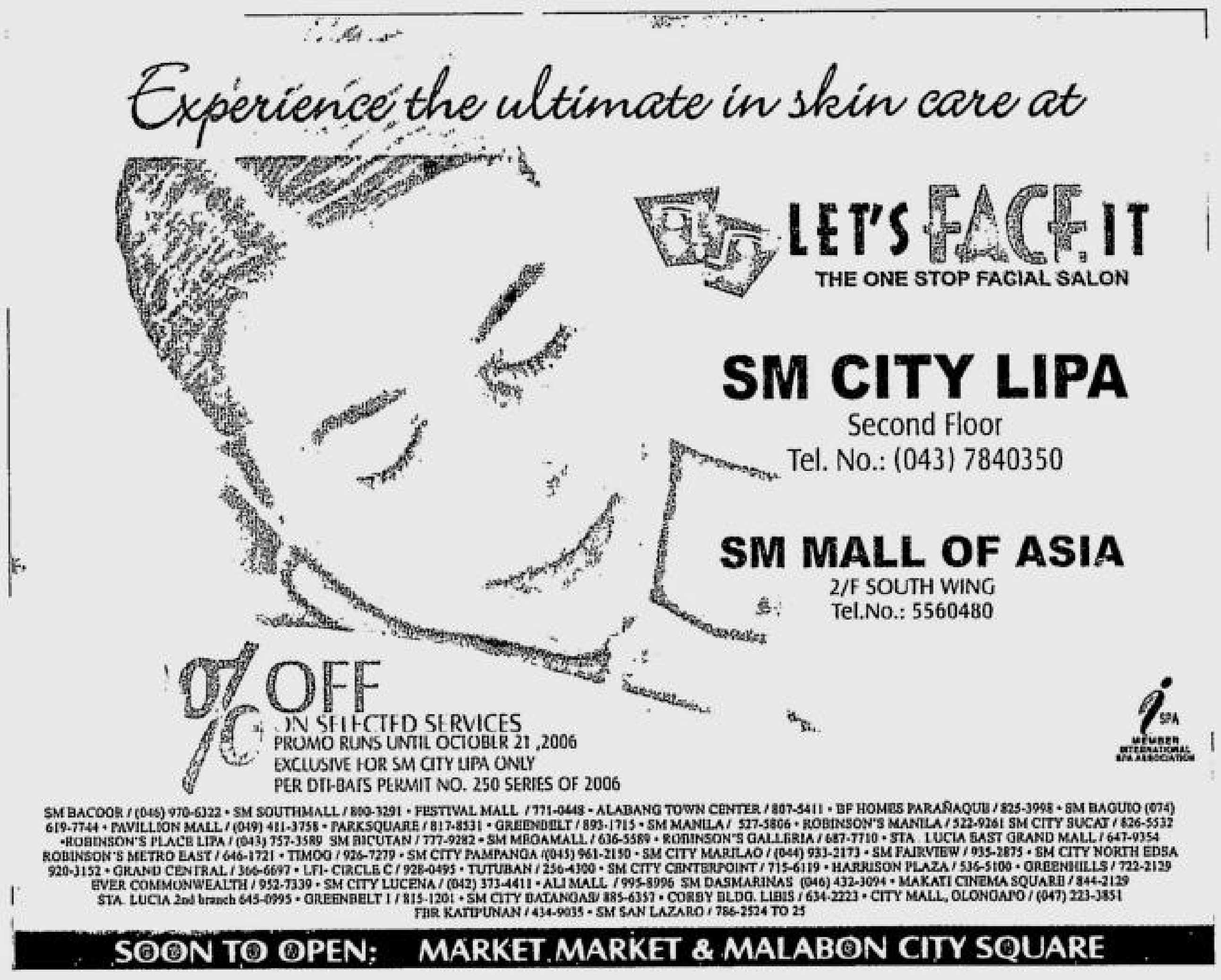
LOUGEE (MOJOFLY)

I've had "Madonna" by Andrew Morton for a long time now. It's an inspiring biography of someone I look up to. It talks about how Madonna started out and struggled as an artist. Before she became a star, she went through lots of obstacles. She's a very dedicated artist. Her story taught me to value discipline, being an artist myself.

Marinel R. Cruz

MADONNA
ANDREW MORTON
BOOKS

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN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From Paris to New York

RED CARPET

Vera Farmiga and Leonardo DiCaprio arrive at the screening of their movie "The Departed" on Oct. 10 at the Grand Rex, Paris. AFP

"The Devil Wears Prada" author Lauren Weisberger and actress Suzanne Somers (extreme right) grace the Quill Awards Gala in New York City on Oct. 10. REUTERS

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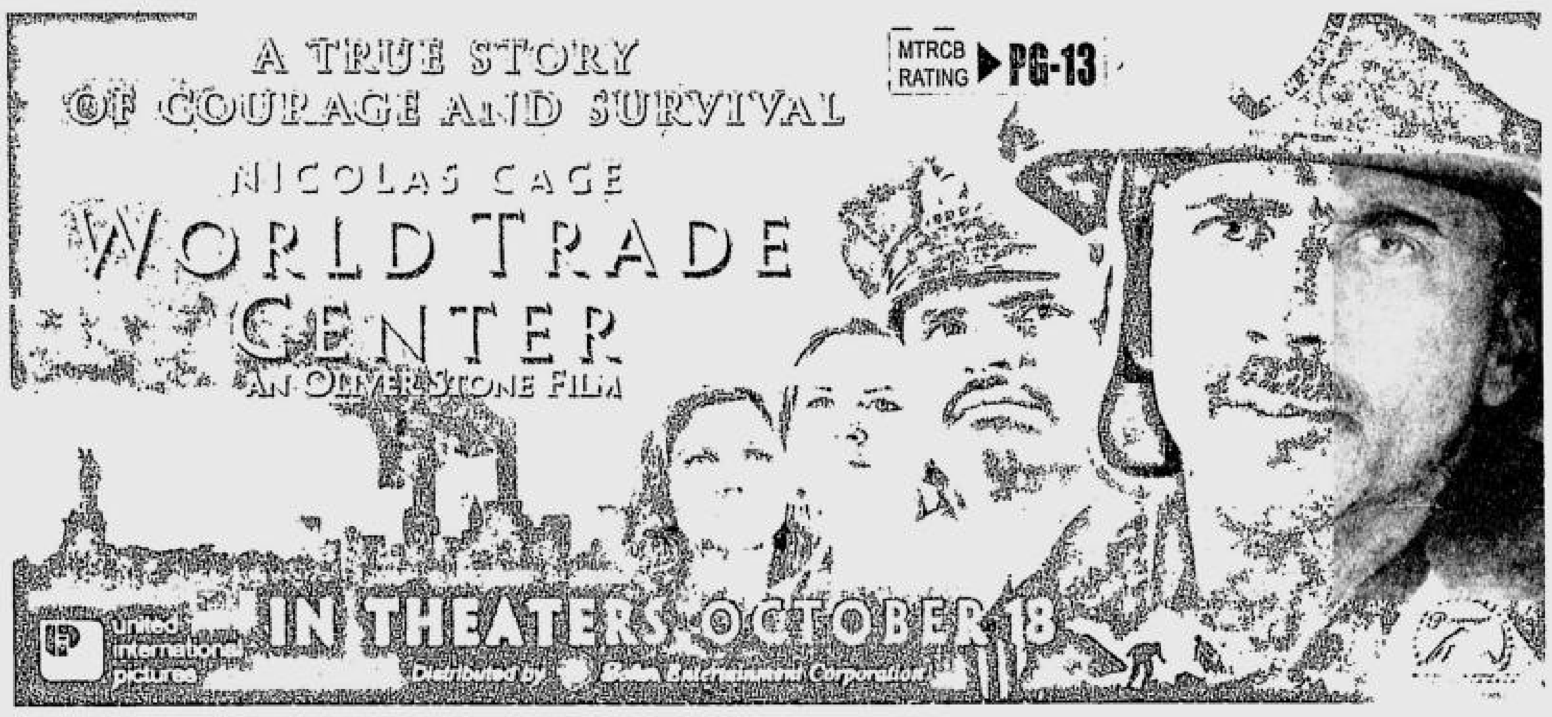
A TRUE STORY OF COURAGE AND SURVIVAL
MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13
NICOLAS CAGE
WORLD TRADE CENTER
AN OLIVER STONE FILM
United International Pictures
IN THEATERS OCTOBER 18
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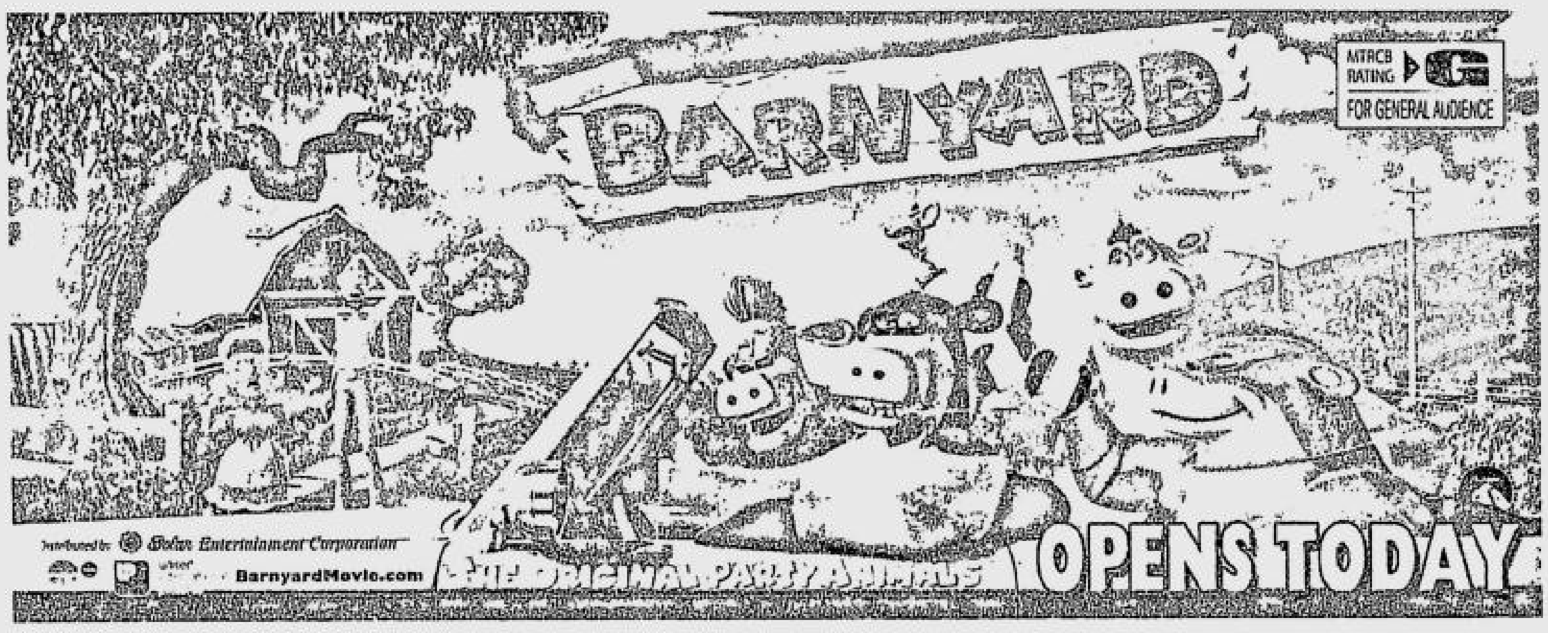
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AT THE CINEMAS

THX

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G1	1 MY FIRST WEDDING	2 THE GUARDIAN	3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	4 TILL I MET YOU	
G4	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 THX CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS		
	4 THE DEPARTED	5 BARNYARD	6 THE GUARDIAN	7 TILL I MET YOU	
GB1	1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	2 TILL I MET YOU			
GB3	1 THX PELICULA: 5TH SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE GUARDIAN 1:00, 3:45, 6:30, 9:15, 12:00 GUARANTEED SEATS			
	3 GREEN STREET HOOLIGANS 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE DEPARTED 2:30, 5:30, 8:30, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC	1 THX THE GUARDIAN GUARANTEED SEATS	2 TILL I MET YOU			
	3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	4 BARNYARD	5 THE DEPARTED		
ACC	1 THE GUARDIAN	2 TILL I MET YOU	3 FLYBOYS	4 THE DEPARTED	
M2	1 BARNYARD	2 TILL I MET YOU			
	3 THE GUARDIAN	4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: THE BEGINNING	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION		

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GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Anson's Exhibit October 5 to 21, 2006	Automatic Center Exhibit October 13 to 27, 2007
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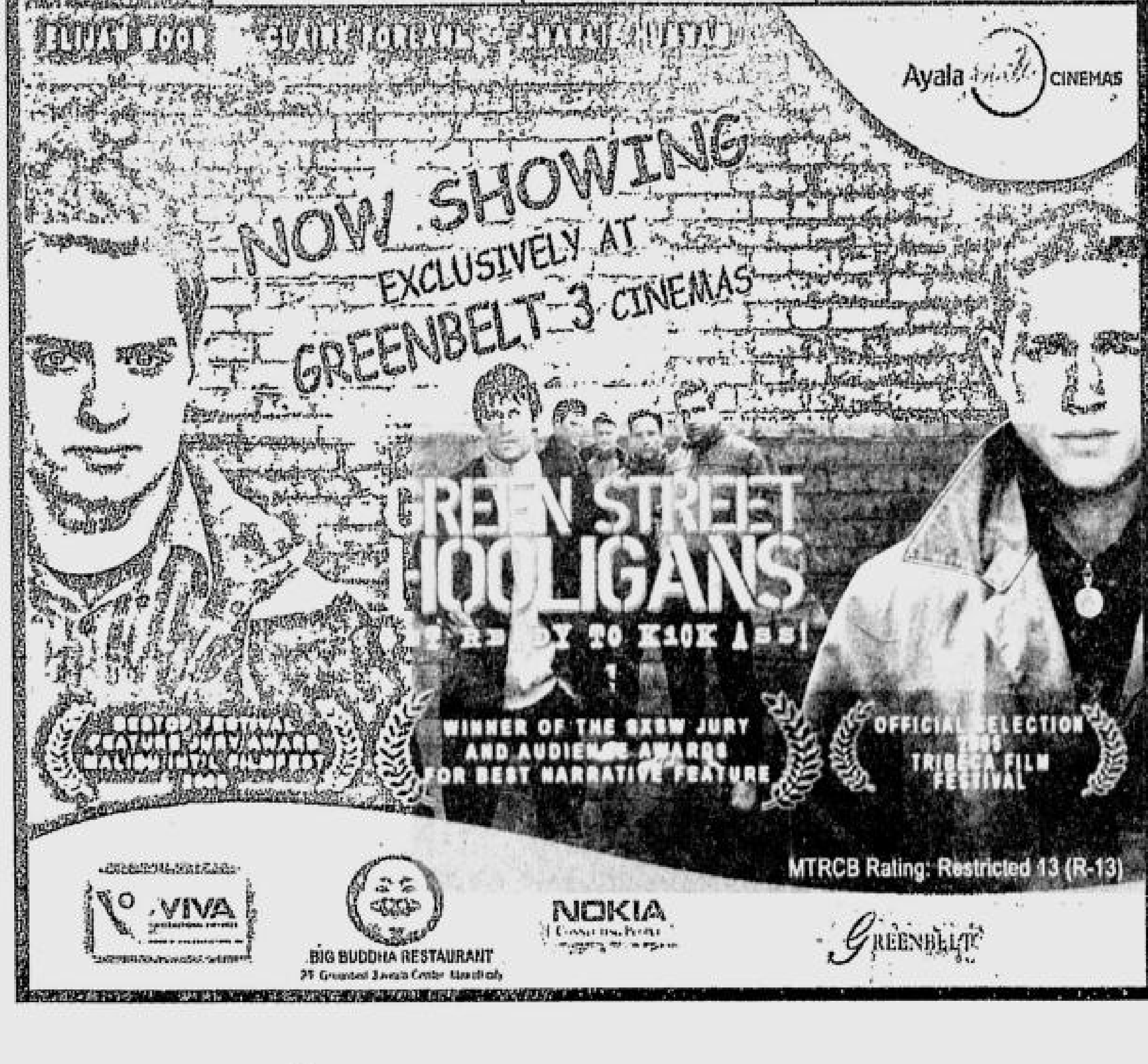
Wafer Modeling Workshop Culmination October 15, 2006	Home Improvement October 12 to 15, 2006

GREENBELT	Marlboro Red Racing Zone Exhibit October 13 & 14, 2006
GREENBELT'S Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Walt Disney's ALADDIN Jr. at REP's Globe Theater - October 9 to 29, 2006
Ayala MUSEUM	19th - 20th Century Philippine Art from Ayala Museum Collection On-going until January 2007 For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org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glorietta

Bong turns 40

From page 14

night," recalled sister Andrea Bautista-Ynares, who is married to Jun Ynares, general manager of Laguna Lake Development Authority.

Industry bigwigs came in full force to greet the actor-politician at the Heritage: ABS-CBN's Charo Santos and Cory Vidanes, Star Cinema's Malou Santos, Regal's Lily Monteverde, action stars Phillip Salvador and Rudy Fernandez, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and "Hokus Pokus" co-star Yasmien Kurdi and his GMA 7 family.

YASMIEN KURDI

At the Heritage, Bong blew the candles on the cake alongside longtime publicist Chit Ramos.

"I've known him since he was 10," Chit said of Bong.

In Cavite, President Macapagal-Arroyo joined Bong, wife Lani Mercado and kids Bryan, Jolo, Ina, Gianna, Ludette and Ram and grandson Gabby onstage.

As the revelry went on, Ramon Revilla Sr., Bong's father, talked shop with the President and his son-in-law Robert Jaworksi (who is married to Ramon Sr.'s daughter Evelyn). *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

DID YOU KNOW...

AS INCENTIVE, actor Cesar Montano dangled three Barbie dolls so that his daughter Angelina wouldn't throw tantrums on the set of their TV commercial.

The TV ad's staff also had a roomful of toys on stand by.

Needless to say, the shoot went smoothly.

* * *

Miguel Garcia, the son of former ABS-CBN president Freddie Garcia, is co-producing the new reality mixed martial arts show "Real Pinoy Fighter," a blocktimer in Channel 2.

Does this signal the return of Garcia to the Kapamilya network?

Yes, according to Maloli K. Espinosa, vice president for Government, Corporate Affairs and PR. Garcia is back on board as an independent board member, as of Aug. 4.

Other new appointments in ABS-CBN are Mike Navarette, chief finance officer (as of Aug. 24) and Marissa Nubla, head of Property Management (as of Sept. 15).

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October 13 (Friday) 7:00 pm
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October 15 (Sunday) 2:30 pm

Ticket at P150 *(Get P20 OFF with valid student ID)

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•Oct 18	ANNAPOLIS	•Nov 1	INVINCIBLE
•Oct 25	STICK IT	•Nov 22	THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
IMAX
T-REX
11:00AM 12:30PM 2:00PM
3:00PM 8:00PM 9:30
SUPERMAN RETURNS
5:00PM
DEAD OR ALIVE
PULSE
THE DEPARTED
MY FIRST WEDDING
STEP UP
FIRST DAY HIGH
PREMIERE CINEMA
TILL I MET YOU
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
THE GUARDIAN
CENTERSTAGE
THE GUARDIAN
CINEMA 1
THE GUARDIAN
CINEMA 2
THE DEPARTED
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
STEP UP
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE BREED
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
FIRST DAY HIGH
PULSE
THE DEPARTED

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
THE GUARDIAN
DEAD OR ALIVE
PHILIPPINE IDOL
FIRST DAY HIGH
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
STEP UP
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE
WICKER MAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE BREED
STEP UP
PULSE
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
FLY BOYS
ZOOM

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
THE GUARDIAN
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE DEPARTED
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
STEP UP
ZOOM
THE BREED
PULSE
DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
THE GUARDIAN
PULSE
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE DEPARTED
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE
MY FIRST WEDDING
THE GUARDIAN
STEP UP
ZOOM
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE
THE DEPARTED

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
POSSESSED BY EVIL
MY FIRST WEDDING
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE DEPARTED
FLY BOYS
THE GUARDIAN
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE BREED
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE
STEP UP
TILL I MET YOU

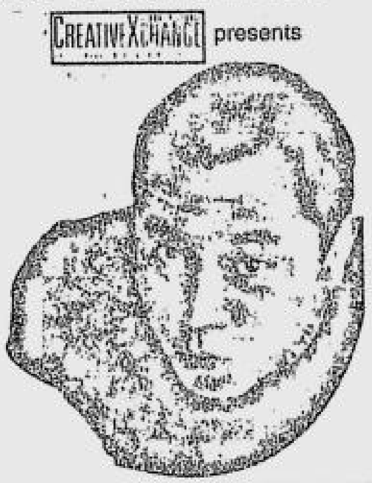
SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4333201-04
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
THE DEPARTED
STEP UP

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU
PULSE

SHOWTiME
Event Calendar

CREATIVE XCHANGE presents



Rex Navarrete
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MEGAMALL Cinema 10

Tickets at

Orch. Center	P800	Balc. Center	P500
Orch. Sides	P500	Balc. Sides	P300

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LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE GUARDIAN
DEAD OR ALIVE
PULSE
TILL I MET YOU
THE DEPARTED
MY FIRST WEDDING

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
THE GUARDIAN
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
FLY BOYS
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
WICKER MAN
TILL I MET YOU
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637081-85
THE GUARDIAN
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEAD OR ALIVE
TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY LIPA
SCOOP
TILL I MET YOU
WICKER MAN
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
YOU,ME AND DUPREE
TILL I MET YOU
FLY BOYS
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
TILL I MET YOU
DEAD OR ALIVE
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
THE GUARDIANS

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
TILL I MET YOU
TILL I MET YOU
FIRST DAY HIGH
PULSE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341205-06
STEP UP
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE GUARDIAN
TILL I MET YOU

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
THE DEPARTED
THE GUARDIAN
FLY BOY
SCOOP
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
THE BREED

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
THE BREED
RESERVE
WICKER MAN
FIRST DAY HIGH
TILL I MET YOU
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
RESERVED
FLY BOYS

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
THE DEPARTED
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
TILL I MET YOU
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
FLY BOYS

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
DEAD OR ALIVE
TILL I MET YOU
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
THE BREED

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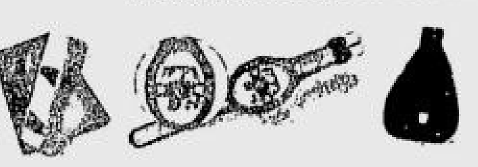
movietime PROMO
Watch and Win at SM Cinema



Here's your chance to win The Guardian towels, bags, and watches from Buena Vista International!

Simply arrange the scrambled letters below to form the answer.

Where did Jake Fischer (Ashton Kutcher) go after graduation?
ADIKKO AAAKLS

Answer: ____________

Send in your answers together with your name, age, address, and contact number to movieaddicts_smcinema@yahoo.com on or before October 17. Ten (10) lucky winners will be chosen from all the entries received. Multiple entries sent will only be counted as a single entry. Winners will be notified through phone.

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MTRCB Rating: PG-13

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

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GALLERIA

1 TALLADEGA NIGHTS • THX
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 TILL I MET YOU
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00
4 THE DEPARTED
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
5 THE GUARDIAN
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
6 TWILIGHT DANCERS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
7 BARNYARD
8 PULSE
1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00
9 STEP UP
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
10 MY FIRST WEDDING
1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

ERMITA

1 TILL I MET YOU
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 9:50
2 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
3 STEP UP
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
4 MY FIRST WEDDING
11:45 1:45 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00
5 THE DEPARTED
11:30 2:15 5:00 7:45 10:00
6 BARNYARD
7 THE GUARDIAN
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

METRO EAST

1 BARNYARD
2 TILL I MET YOU
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
3 STEP UP
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
4 THE DEPARTED
11:20 2:30 5:40 9:00
5 PULSE
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
6 MY FIRST WEDDING
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
7 THE GUARDIAN
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00
8 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

NOVALICHES

1 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 BARNYARD
5 THE DEPARTED

CITISQUARE MALABON

1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER

1 THE GUARDIAN
2 BARNYARD
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

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1 THE GUARDIAN
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 STEP UP

LIPA

1 THE WICKER MAN
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

DASMARINAS

1 STEP UP
2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE DEPARTED

ANGELES

1 THE GUARDIAN
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 THE BREED

IMUS

1 THE DEPARTED
2 POSSESSED BY EVIL
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GUARDIAN

STARMILLS

1 THE GUARDIAN
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE BREED
5 DEAD OR ALIVE
6 THE DEPARTED

BACOLOD

1 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 CRANK
5 SCOOP
6 TWILIGHT DANCERS

ILOILO

1 FLY BOYS
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 THE BREED
4 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

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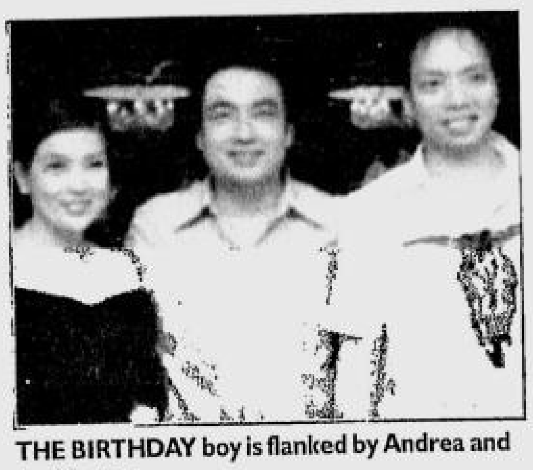

THE BIRTHDAY boy is flanked by Andrea and Jun Ynares.

CHIT RAMOS and Bong blow the candles on their cakes.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANDREA YNARES

RAMON REVILLA SR. and Robert Jaworski

GIGI DE LA RIVA and Marlon Bautista

POWER table (from left): Lily Monteverde, Charo Santos, Jolo Revilla, Cory Vidanes and Malou Santos.

WITH his constituents in Cavite

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO joins the celebrator, Lani and their kids onstage.

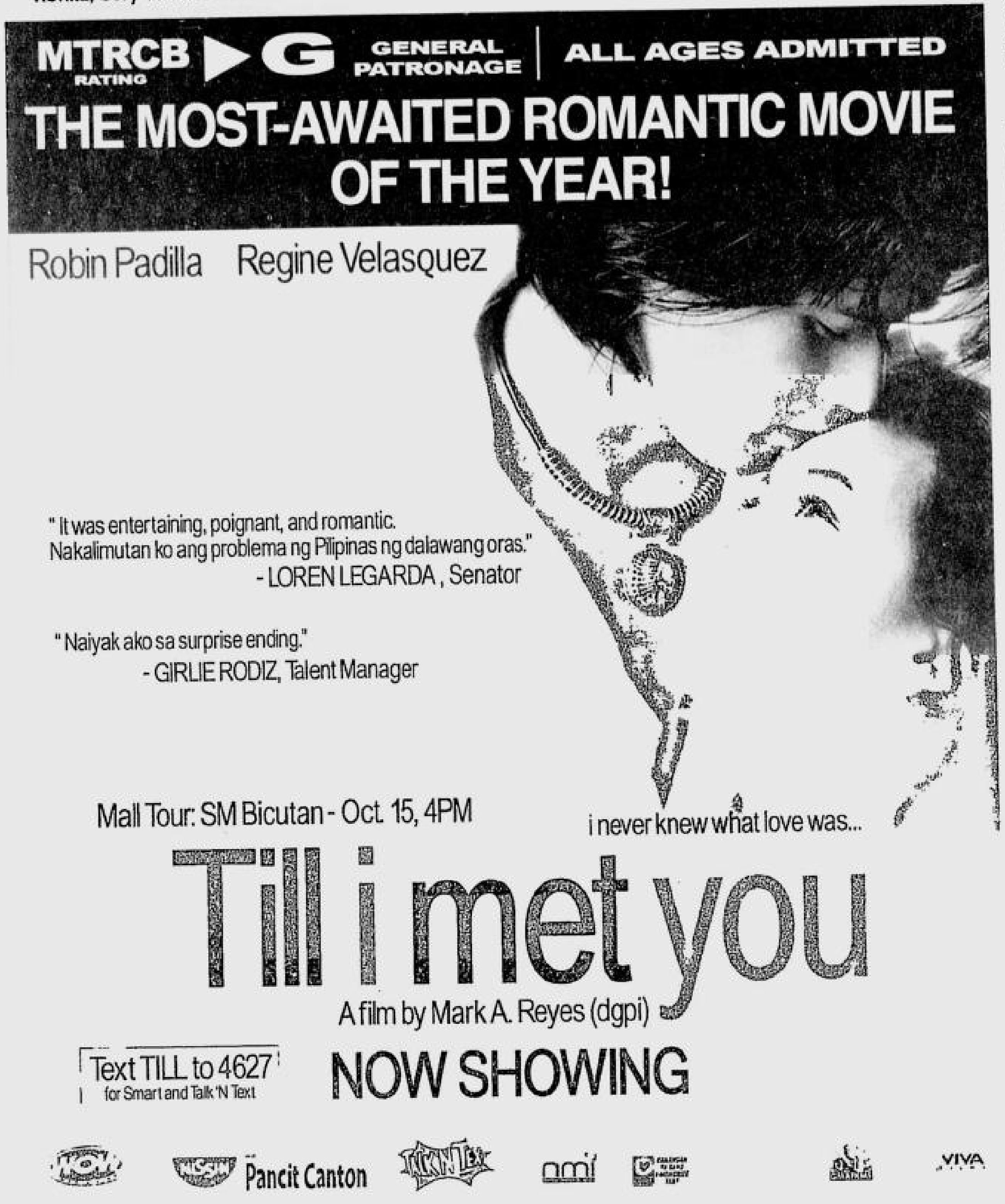
PARTY! PARTY!

Bong at 40

"LIFE BEGINS AT 40," declared Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., who celebrated his birthday twice—at the Heritage Hotel on Sept. 23 and at the family's mansion in Cavite on Sept. 25 (his actual birthday).

"The first party, which was for show biz colleagues and close friends, lasted until 4 a.m. The second one, for his constituents and provincial leaders, wrapped up at 4 a.m. also. Over a thousand people were at the family compound that

BONG/13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THE MOST-AWAITED ROMANTIC MOVIE OF THE YEAR!
Robin Padilla Regine Velasquez
" It was entertaining, poignant, and romantic. Nakalimutan ko ang problema ng Pilipinas ng dalawang oras."
- LOREN LEGARDA , Senator
" Naiyak ako sa surprise ending."
- GIRLIE RODIZ, Talent Manager
Mall Tour: SM Bicutan - Oct. 15, 4PM
i never knew what love was...
Till i met you
A film by Mark A. Reyes (dgpi)
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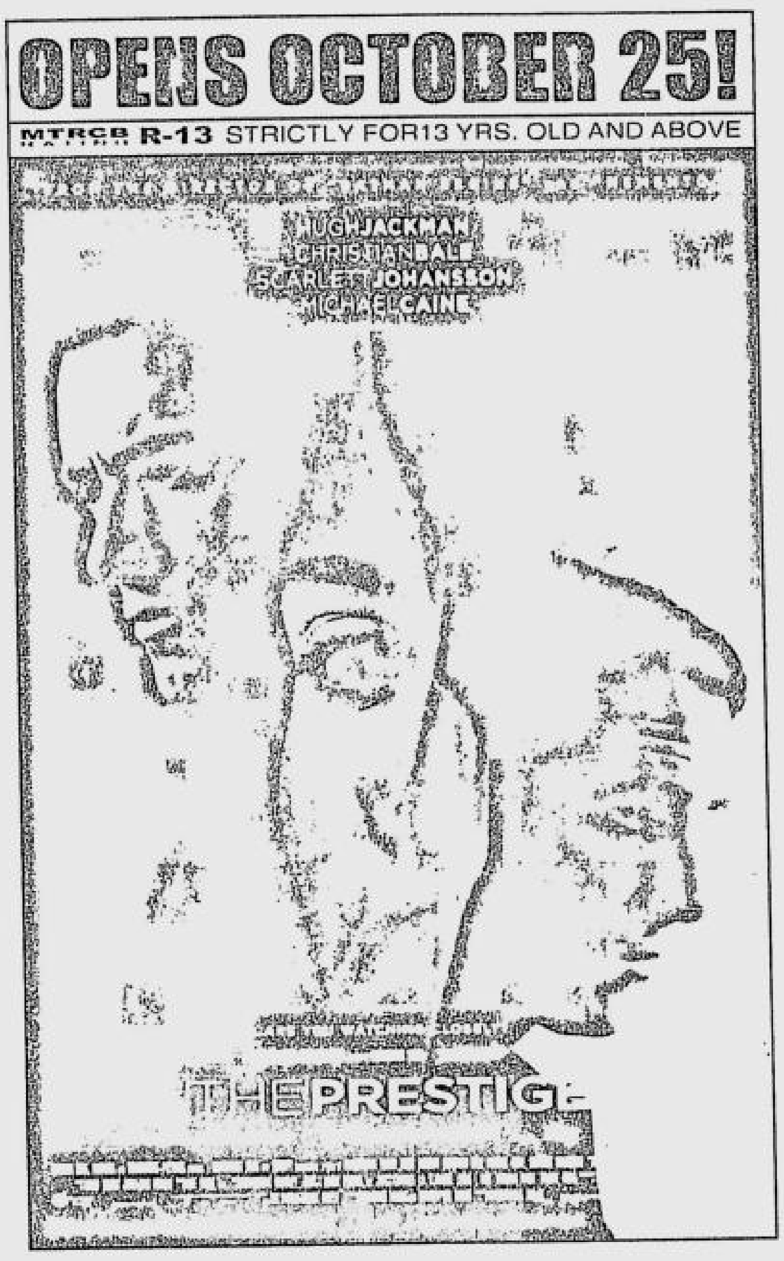
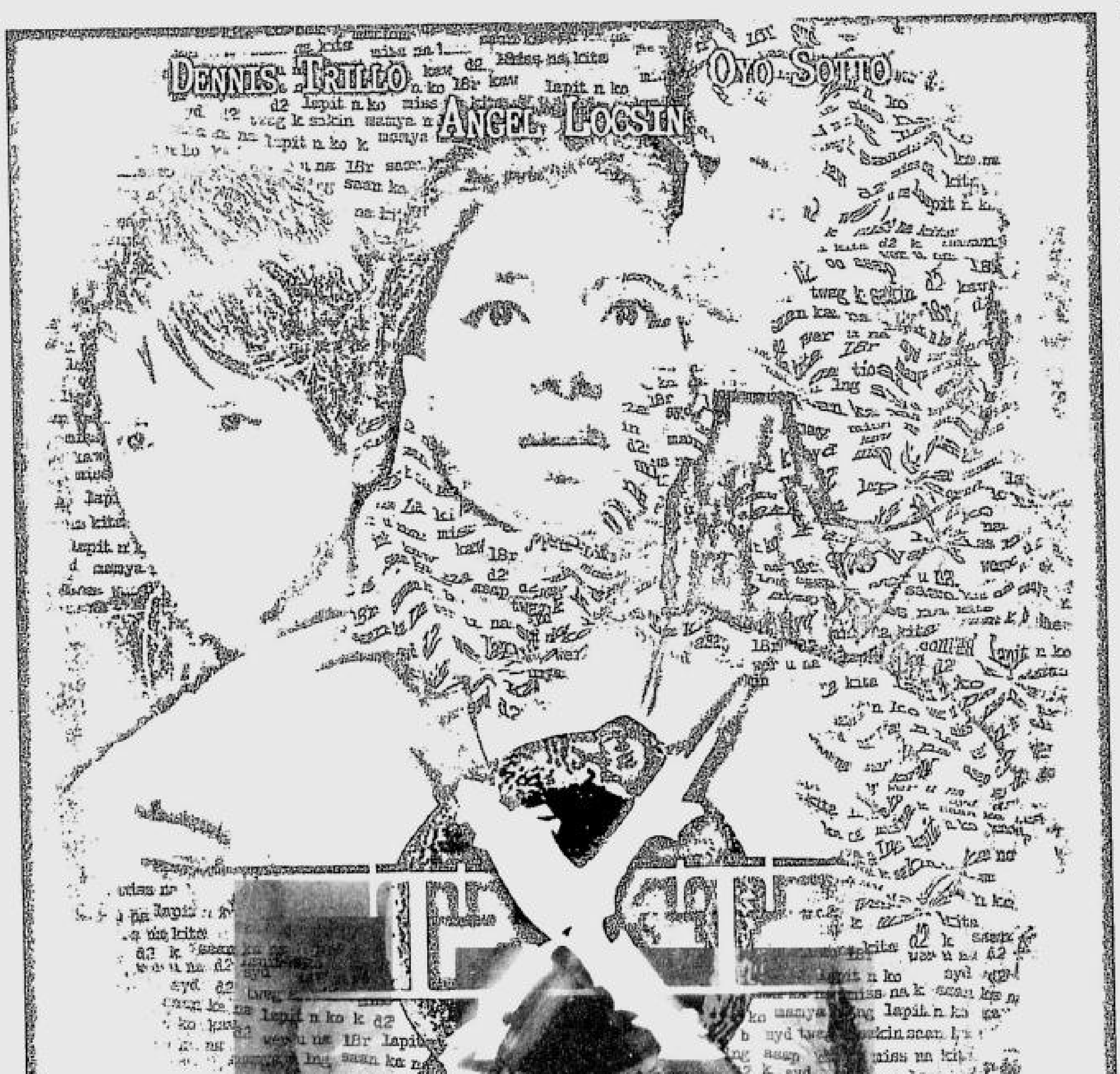
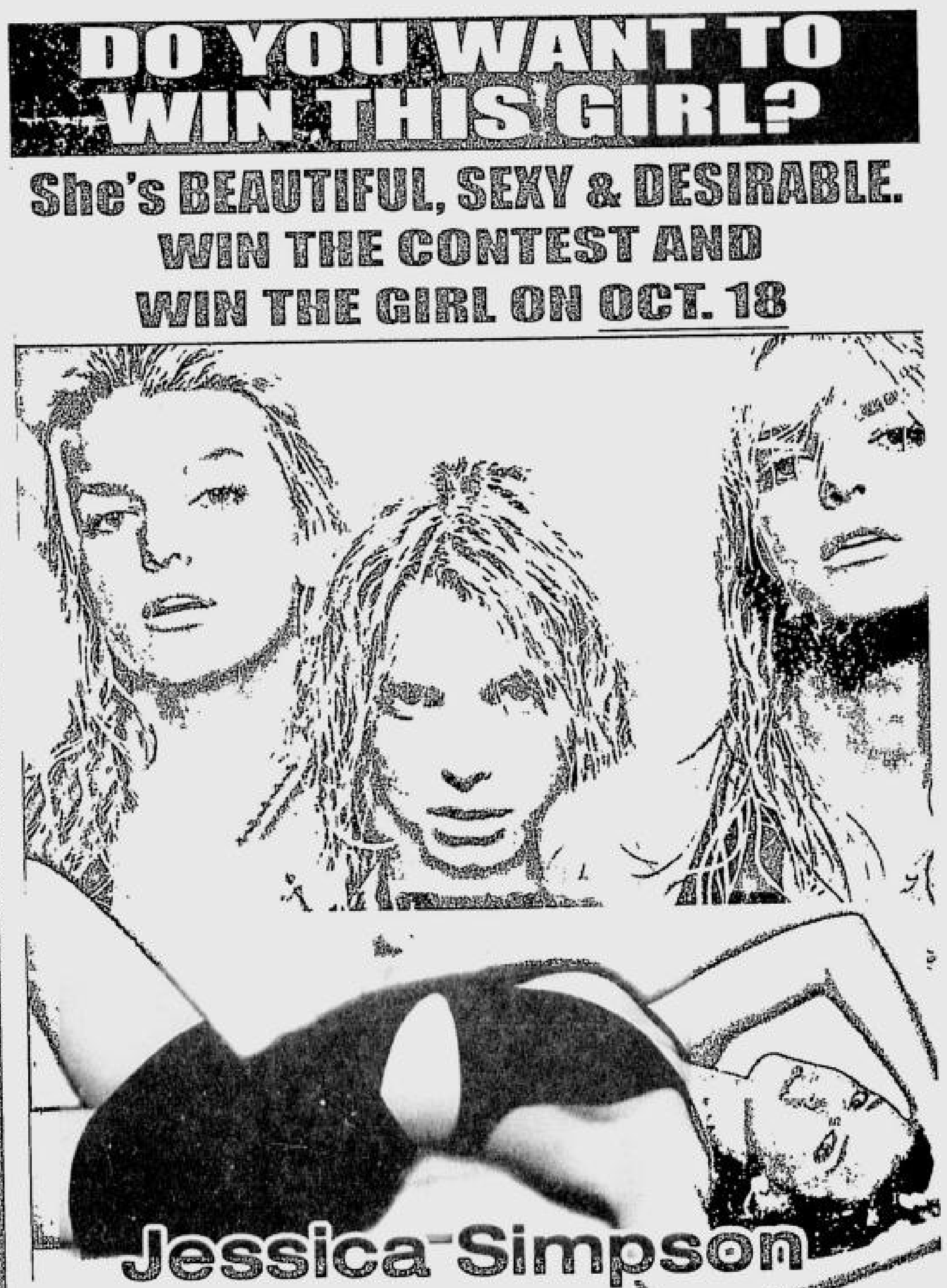
Pancit Canton
VIVA


OPENS OCTOBER 25!
MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR13 YRS. OLD AND ABOVE
HUGH JACKMAN
CHRISTIAN BALE
SCARLETT JOHANSSON
MICHAEL CAINE
THE PRESTIGE


DENNIS TRILLO
OYO SOTTO
ANGEL LOCSIN
TEXT
A FILM BY MICHAEL TUVIERA
DANTE RIVERO JULIA CLARETE PERLA BAUTISTA BING LOYZAGA
EUGENE DOMINGO LORENZO MARA ALLAN K
OPENS OCTOBER 18
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC.


DO YOU WANT TO WIN THIS GIRL?
She's BEAUTIFUL, SEXY & DESIRABLE.
WIN THE CONTEST AND
WIN THE GIRL ON OCT. 18
Jessica Simpson
Employee of the Month